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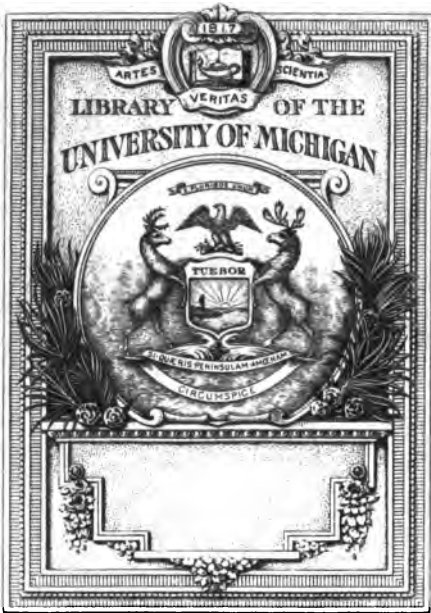
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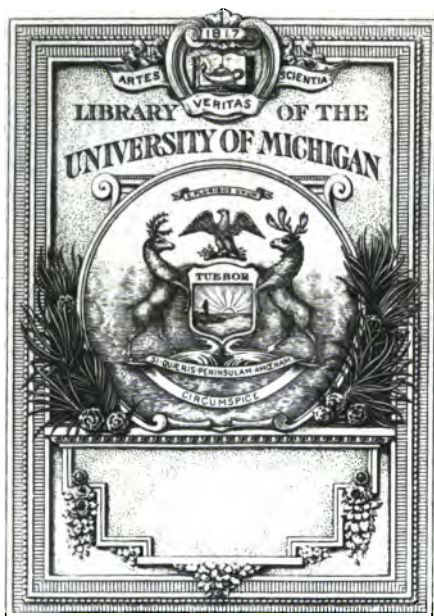


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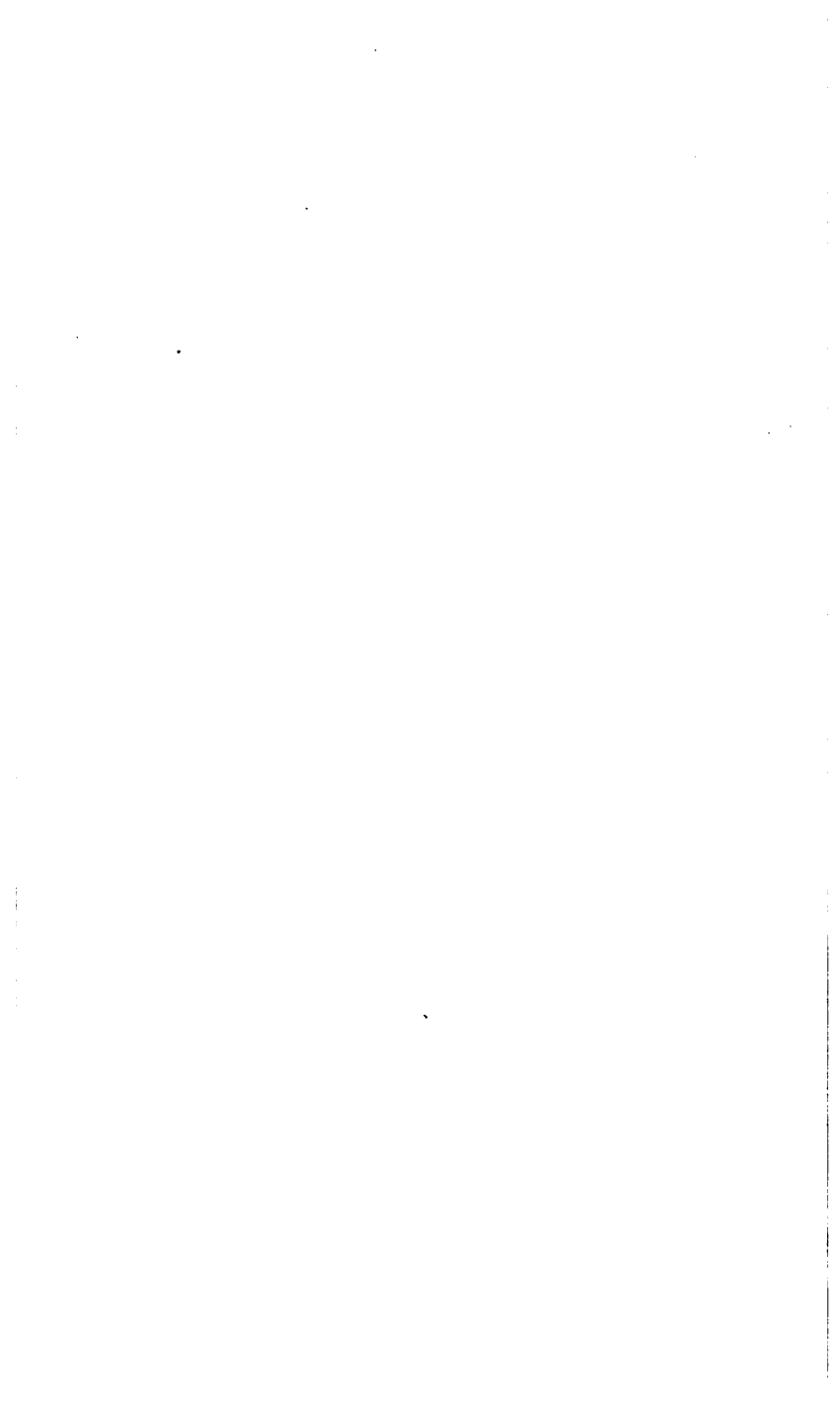


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THE
CONQUEST OF FLORIDA,
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UNDER

HERNANDO DE SOTO.

BY THEODORE IRVING.

Son quattromila, e bene armati e bene
Instrutti, usi al disagio e tolleranti.
Buona è la gente, e non on può da più dotta
O da più forte guida esser condotta.—*Tasso.*

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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CONQUEST OF FLORIDA.

CHAPTER I.

The Spaniards resume their march—The Princess of Cofachiqui carried away captive—A mutiny—The army traverse the territory of the Cherokees—Escape of the young Princess—Juan Terron and his pearls.

1540. ON the third of May, 1540, De Soto again set forward on his adventurous journey, taking with him the beautiful Princess of Cofachiqui and her train*. His route now lay

* The captivity of this Princess is given on the authority of the Portuguese historian. The Inca, Garcilaso de la Vega makes no mention of it. The former intimates that she was treated with neglect; but this is contrary to the general conduct of De Soto towards the Caciques whom he detained as hostages.

towards the north or north-west, in the direction of the province of Cosa, which was said to be at the distance of twelve days' journey. As the country through which the troops were to march, was represented as being destitute of provisions, Gonzalo Silvestre and two other cavaliers were detached with a large body of horse and foot to a village, twelve leagues off, where there was a large deposit of grain, with which they had orders to load themselves, and rejoin the main army.

Silvestre and his companions, having successfully executed these orders, took as much maize as they could carry, and hastened back to the army, but were five days before they could succeed in coming upon its traces. When they did so, they found that the troops, having continued their march, were a considerable distance in advance. Here some difficulties occurred. The foot soldiers were eager to press forward, but the troopers demurred. Three of their horses were lame, and it would not do to leave any of these valuable animals behind, for they were considered the sinews of the army, not merely on account of their real services, but from the extreme dread with which they inspired the savages.

A mutinous spirit showed itself for a while, among the infantry, who dreading a separation from the main force, set forward in a tumultuous manner. Their captains, however, threw themselves before them, and with difficulty compelled them to continue with the cavalry, who were obliged to proceed at a slow pace, proportioned to the condition of the maimed horses.

On the following day, as they were marching under the heat of a noon-tide sun, there suddenly arose a violent hurricane, accompanied with tremendous thunder, lightning, and hail of such size as to wound whatever it struck. The Spaniards sheltered themselves under their bucklers, or took refuge beneath some large trees which happened to be at hand. Fortunately, the hurricane was as brief as it was violent; yet the soldiers were so severely bruised by the hail-stones, that they remained encamped for the remainder of that and the ensuing day.

Resuming their march on the morning of the third day, they passed through various deserted hamlets, and at length crossed the frontiers of a province called Xuala, where to their great joy, they found the Adelantado and

his troops encamped in a beautiful valley, awaiting their arrival.

In the course of his march, De Soto had traversed the province of Achalaque*, the most wretched country, says the Portuguese narrator in all Florida. The inhabitants were a feeble, peaceful race, nearly naked. They lived principally on herbs, roots, and wild fowl, which they killed with their arrows. Their Cacique brought the Governor two deer skins, which he seemed to think a considerable present. Wild hens abounded in such quantities, that in one village the inhabitants brought seven hundred into the Spanish camp†. Most of the inhabitants of this miserable province fled to the woods on the Spaniards' approach, leaving few inhabitants in their villages, except the old, blind and infirm.

The army remained several days in Xuala, to recruit the horses‡. Their principal village

* Spelt Chalague in the Portuguese narration. Supposed to be the barren country of the Cherokees.

† Evidently the species of grouse, commonly called the Prairie hen.

‡ Xuala, or Choula, is supposed to have been on the site of the present town of Qualatehe, at the source of the Catahootche river. Vide M'Culloch's Researches, Appendix III.

bearing the same name as the province, was situated on the skirts of a mountain, with a small but rapid river flowing by it. Here the Spaniards found maize in abundance, as well as different kinds of fruits and vegetables common to the country.

This place was under the domination of the youthful Princess of Cofachiqui; and here, as every where else along the route, the Spaniards found the advantage of having her with them. She was always treated with great reverence by the inhabitants of the villages, who, at her command, furnished the army with provisions, and with porters to carry the baggage. And here, it is proper to observe, that De Soto endeavoured, on all occasions, as far as his means permitted, to requite the kindness of the natives; making presents to such of the chieftains as treated him amicably, and leaving with each a couple of swine, male and female, from which to raise a future stock.

On leaving Xuala, a number of the inhabitants accompanied the Spaniards, laden with provisions. The first day's march was through a country covered with fields of maize of luxuriant growth. De Soto had directed his march to the westward, in search of a province

called Quaxale, where the territories of the Princess, or rather of her tributary Caciques, terminated. While they were on the march, the female Cacique alighted from the litter on which she was borne, and eluding the Indian slaves who had charge of her, fled into the depths of a neighbouring forest. Her escape is related by the Portuguese historian, but no particular reason is given for it; probably, she dreaded being carried away captive beyond the bounds of her dominions. What seems to have caused much regret to the Spaniards, if we may believe the authority already so often referred to, was, that she took with her a small box made of reeds, called by the Indians *Pétarca*, filled with beautiful unpierced pearls of great value*. Two negro slaves and a Barbary Moor accompanied her in her flight, and as it was afterwards understood, were concealed by the natives, who rejoiced at having something among them that had belonged to the white men.

During the next five days, the Spaniards traversed a chain of mountains covered with oak and mulberry trees, with intervening val-

* Portuguese Narration, c. 15.

leys, rich in pasturage, and irrigated by clear and rapid streams. These mountains were twenty leagues across, and quite uninhabited*. In the course of their weary march throughout this desolate tract, a foot soldier, calling to a horseman, who was his friend, drew forth from his wallet a linen bag, in which were six pounds of pearls, probably filched from one of the Indian sepulchres. These he offered as a gift to his comrade, being heartily tired of carrying them on his back, though he had a pair of broad shoulders, capable of bearing the burthen of a mule. The horseman refused to accept so thoughtless an offer. "Keep them yourself," said he, "you have most need of them.

* Probably the termination of the Apalachian or Alleghany range, running through the northern part of Georgia. Martin, in his history of Louisiana, makes the Spaniards traverse the state of Tennessee, and even penetrate the state of Kentucky, as far north as the thirty-seventh degree of north latitude. This is evidently erroneous, as both the Portuguese and Spanish chroniclers state, that from the province of Xuala, De Soto struck off in a westerly direction, and we find him, in a few days on the banks of the river Canasauga.

Belknap, V. I. p. 189, suggests, that the Spaniards crossed the mountains within the thirty-fifth degree of latitude.

The Governor intends shortly to send messengers to Havana, where you can forward these presents, and have them sold, and obtain three or four horses with the proceeds, so that then you will have no further need to travel on foot."

Juan Terron was piqued at having his offer refused. "Well," said he, "if you will not have them, I swear I will not carry them, and they shall remain here." So saying he untied the bag, and whirling it round, as if he were sowing seed, scattered the pearls in all directions among the thickets and herbage. Then putting up the bag in his wallet, as if it was more valuable than the pearls, he marched on leaving his comrade and other by-standers astonished at his folly.

The soldiers made a hasty search for the scattered pearls, and recovered thirty of them. When they beheld their great size and beauty, none of them being bored and discoloured, they lamented that so many had been lost; for the whole would have sold in Spain for more than six thousand ducats. This egregious folly gave rise to a common proverb in the army, that "there are no pearls for Juan Terron." The poor fellow himself be-

came an object of constant jests and ridicule, until at last, made sensible of his absurd conduct, he implored his comrades never to banter him further upon the subject.*

* Garcilaso de la Vega. L. 3. c. 20.

they came in sight of Ichiaha,* thirty leagues from Guaxale.

This village stood on one end of an island, more than five leagues in length. The Cacique came out to receive the Governor, and gave him a friendly welcome; his warriors treating the Spanish soldiers in the same kind and frank manner. They crossed the river in canoes, and on rafts prepared for the purpose, and were quartered by the Indians in their houses. Most of the soldiers, however, encamped under trees around the village, their worn-out horses enjoying rich and abundant pasturage in the neighbouring meadows. The Spaniards found in this village a quantity of bears' grease preserved in pots, likewise oil made from the walnut, and a pot of honey. The latter they had not before seen, nor did they ever again meet with it during their wanderings.

While he remained in the town of Ichiaha, the Governor, as usual, was diligent in his enquiries after the precious metals. In reply, the Cacique informed him, that about thirty miles to the northward there was a province called Chisca,

* This is spelt Chiaha in the Portuguese Chronicle.

where there were mines of copper, and also of another metal of the same colour, but finer and brighter. He stated, that it was not used by the natives as much as copper, because it was softer, but that they sometimes melted these metals together. This intelligence roused the attention of De Soto. It agreed with what he had been told at Cofachiqui, where he had met with small axes of copper, mingled with gold. He consequently determined to set off in search of the mines, but the Cacique informed him, that he would have to traverse an uninhabited wilderness, and mountains impassable for horses, and therefore advised him to send persons to visit the province of Chisca, offering to furnish them with guides.

De Soto adopted his advice. Juan de Vilalobos and Francisco de Silvera, two fearless soldiers, forthwith offered their services, and accordingly set off on foot, leaving their horses behind, as these would only delay and embarrass them in the rough country through which they would have to travel.

After an absence of ten days, they returned to the camp and made their report. Part of their route was through excellent land for grain and pasturage, where they

had been well received, and entertained by the natives. They had found among them a buffalo's hide, an inch thick, with hair as soft as the wool of a sheep: this hide they mistook as usual for the hide of an ox. In the course of their journey they had crossed mountains, so rugged and precipitous that it was impossible for an army to traverse them. As to the yellow metal of which they had heard, it proved to be nothing but a fine kind of copper or brass, such as they had already met with; nevertheless, from the appearance of the soil they thought it probable that both gold and silver might exist in the neighbourhood.*

During the time De Soto remained at the village awaiting the return of the two soldiers from the mines, several circumstances had occurred. The Cacique came one day to the Governor, bringing a present of a string of pearls, five feet in length. These pearls were

* Garcilaso de la Vega, L. 3. c. 20. Portuguese Relation, c. 16. The mountains here mentioned are supposed to be the Apalachian chain, running through the northern part of Alabama. The existence of gold in various parts of the Southern States, ascertained of late years, proves that many of these Indian reports were founded in truth.

as large as filberts, and had they not been bored by means of fire, which had discoloured them, would have been of immense value. De Soto thankfully received them, and in return presented the Indian chief with pieces of velvet, and cloth of various colours and other Spanish trifles held in much esteem by the natives. In reply to the demand of De Soto, the Cacique stated that the pearls had been obtained in the neighbourhood. He further told him that in the sepulchre of his ancestors was amassed a prodigious quantity, of which the Spaniards were welcome to carry away as many as they pleased. The Adelantado thanked him for his good will, but replied, that much as he wished for pearls, he never would insult the sanctuaries of the dead to obtain them; adding, that he only accepted the string of pearls as a present from the chieftain's hands.

De Soto having expressed a curiosity to see the manner of extracting pearls from the shells, the Cacique instantly despatched forty canoes to fish for oysters during the night. At an early hour next morning, a quantity of wood was gathered and piled up on the river bank, and being set on fire, was speedily reduced to glowing embers. As soon as the canoes arrived,

the embers were spread out and the oysters laid upon them. They quickly opened with the heat, and from some of the first, thus opened, the Indians obtained ten or twelve pearls as large as peas, which they brought to the Governor and Cacique, who were standing together looking on. These were of a fine quality, but somewhat discoloured by the fire and smoke. The Indians were apt further also to injure the pearls thus obtained, by boring them with a heated copper instrument.

De Soto having gratified his curiosity, returned to his quarters to partake of the morning meal. While eating, a soldier entered with a large pearl in his hand. He had stewed some oysters, and in eating them felt the pearl between his teeth. Not having been injured by fire or smoke, it retained its beautiful whiteness, and was so large and perfect in its form, that several Spaniards who pretended to be skilled in these matters, declared it would be worth four hundred ducats in Spain. The soldier would have given it to the Governor to present to his wife, Doña Isabel de Bobadilla, but De Soto declined the generous offer, advising him to preserve it until he should arrive at Havana, where he might purchase horses and

other necessaries with it; moreover, as a reward for his liberality, De Soto insisted upon paying the fifth of the value due to the crown.

About this time, one Luis Bravo de Xeres, a cavalier, while strolling, with his lance near the borders of a river, saw a small animal at a short distance, and cast his weapon at it. The lance missed its mark, but, slipping along the grass, shot over the river bank. Luis Bravo ran to recover it, but to his horror found he had killed a Spaniard, who had been fishing with a reed on the margin of the stream. The steel point of the lance having entered one temple and passed out at the other, the poor Spaniard had dropped dead on the spot. His name was Juan Mateos; he was the only one in the expedition that had gray hairs, from which circumstance he was universally called father, and respected as such. His unfortunate death was lamented by the whole army.

CHAPTER III.

How the Spaniards were treated by the Cacique of Acoste, at whose village they arrived—The manner in which the young Cacique Cosa came forth to meet them.—The Indians show a hostile disposition.—The Cacique Cosa escorts them to Talise, and why.

1540. ON the ensuing day, after the return of the soldiers from the mines of Chisca, the Governor departed from the village of Ichiaha, leaving the natives well contented with the presents they had received in return for their hospitality.

This day he marched the whole length of the island, and at sunset, on the 2d of July, came in sight of the village of Acoste, built on the

extremity.* The army encamped about a cross-bow shot from the town, while De Soto proceeded, accompanied by a guard of eight troopers, to visit the Cacique. This chieftain, a fierce warrior, placed himself in battle array, at the head of fifteen hundred followers, decorated with war plumes, and equipped with arms. He received the Governor with great courtesy, and appeared very kindly disposed; but while they were conversing together, some of the foot soldiers had arrived, and began pillaging the houses. The Indians, exasperated at this outrage, seized some war-clubs that were at hand, and assailed the aggressors. De Soto saw at a glance the peril of his situation, surrounded by enemies. With his wonted presence of mind he seized a cudgel and began beating his own men, at the same time that he secretly despatched a trooper to order the horse to arm and come to his rescue. This attack upon his own followers, as if indignant at their conduct,

* The Portuguese Narrator says, this town was seven days' journey from Ichiaha. The Inca is probably the most correct, as he states the length of the island to be about five leagues, which would not be more than a day's march.

conduct, re-assured the savages. De Soto then prevailed upon the Cacique to visit the encampment with his chief warriors, and no sooner had the Indians left the village with this intent than the troopers surrounded them and carried them off prisoners.* Notwithstanding their captivity, they maintained an arrogant air, answering every question insolently, shaking their fists, and insulting the Spaniards with taunts and menaces, until the latter lost all patience, and were only restrained from coming to blows by the peremptory commands of the Adelantado. This night they posted sentries, and kept as vigilant a watch as though they had been in an enemy's country.

On the following day, the natives were more peaceable and friendly; the Cacique furnishing the Governor with maize for his journey, and offering him every other necessary that his dominions afforded. A message received from Ichiaha was the cause of this civility. De Soto thanked him for his offer, liberated him and his warriors, and in return for the maize, made him presents that greatly pleased him.

* Portuguese Narrative, c. 16.

The same morning they quitted the village, and crossed the river on rafts and in canoes, rejoicing at having extricated themselves from this village, without bloodshed.

They now travelled more than a hundred leagues through a fertile and populous province, called Cosa, at the rate of four leagues a day; sometimes lodging in the hamlets, sometimes encamping in the fields. Through the whole distance they were treated with great kindness, by the inhabitants, who quartered them in their houses, supplied their wants, and escorted them from one village to another. In this way they proceeded for twenty-four days, until they came in sight of the village of Cosa, from which the province took its name. This was the residence of the Cacique, who had sent them repeated and friendly messages in the course of their journey. He came to meet them in a kind of litter, borne by four of his chief warriors. From his shoulders hung a mantle of martin skins, fashioned much after the manner of the mantles worn by Spanish females, and on his head was a diadem of feathers. Several Indians walked beside

the litter, singing and playing upon musical instruments.*

He was a young man about twenty-six years of age, of a fine person and noble countenance, and attended by a train of a thousand warriors, tall and well formed, as were generally the people of this country. His followers were in their finest array, adorned with lofty plumes of different colours, and wearing mantles composed of various fine skins, many of them martins, scented with musk. Being marshalled in squadrons, with their gay plumes waving in the breeze, they made a brilliant spectacle.

The village was situated on the banks of a river, † amidst green and beautiful meadows, irrigated by numerous small streams. The country round was populous and fruitful; the houses were well stored with maize and a small kind of bean; and fields of Indian corn ex-

* Portuguese Relation, c. 16.

† Supposed to be the river Coosa, which takes its rise in the Apalachian mountains and empties itself into the Alabama. From the site and description of the village, Mr. M'Culloch presumes it to be the same called in the maps "Old Coosa" situated on the river of the same name in north latitude, about $33^{\circ} 30'$.—See M'Culloch's Researches, p. 524.

tended from village to village. There were plums of various kinds; some like those of Spain, others peculiar to the country. Vines clambered to the very tops of the trees which overhung the river. There were others in the fields, with low stocks which produced large sweet grapes.*

The village contained five hundred dwellings, and as they were very spacious, the captains and soldiers were all well accommodated. De Soto was quartered in the residence of the Cacique.

De Soto often took the precaution in populous villages, where there was any danger to be apprehended from the inhabitants, to surround the Cacique with guards, which kept him in a kind of honourable durance, and prevented his escape. In this way he served as a hostage to ensure the peaceful conduct of his subjects. It was also a part of the Governor's policy, as has been already shewn, to carry the Cacique along with him, as he marched through his dominions; by which

* Portuguese Relation, c. 16. This is supposed to have been the same native grape, called the Isabella, which has since been cultivated.—Vide Bancroft, Hist. U. S. c. 2, p. 54.

means he secured a supply of guides from the villages, as well as of Indians to attend upon the army and transport the baggage. During their march, the Cacique was always treated with great respect and ceremony, having fine raiment provided for him; and if so inclined, a horse was furnished him. On arriving at the territories of another Cacique, the preceding one and his subjects were dismissed at the frontier.

The Indians of Cosa were indignant at the restraint put upon their Chief; and manifested a hostile disposition towards the Spaniards. Several of them were taken prisoners and put in chains, but after a short time, most of them, at their Cacique's intercession, were set at liberty.* After this a good understanding prevailed, and the Spaniards were hospitably entertained during twelve days that they remained in the village.

The Cacique would fain have persuaded the Governor to make Cosa his residence and seat of government, or at least to winter there; but De Soto was anxious to arrive at the bay of Achusi, where he had appointed Captain

* Portuguese Relation, c. 16.

Diego Maldonado to meet him in the autumn. Since quitting the province of Xuala, therefore, he had merely taken a circuitous course through the country, and was now striking off in a southerly direction for the sea coast.

During their stay in this village, a soldier of dissolute character having deserted, concealed himself among the natives, and was no where to be found. A negro, also, being too infirm to travel, was left in charge of the Cacique.

On the 20th of August, the Governor departed from Cosa, taking with him as usual, the Cacique and many of his warriors, together with a train of his subjects, bearing provisions. At one of the villages named Ullabali, a number of Indian warriors assembled, painted and plumed, with bows and arrows in their hands. They welcomed the Spaniards in the name of their chief, and escorted the Governor into the town, where he found all their men in arms, and judged by their hostile aspect, that they meditated an assault. In fact, he was afterwards informed that they had intended to attempt the rescue of the Cacique Cosa, had he approved of their design; but he gave them no encouragement.* The army con-

* Portuguese Relation, c. 17.

tinued forward to the frontier town of Tallise*.

This was an important Indian post, fortified with ramparts of earth and strong palisades, and situated on the bank of a rapid river which nearly surrounded it. Though subject to the Cacique of Cosa, it was represented as disaffected to his rule, and inclined to revolt in favour of a powerful chieftain of the neighbourhood named Tuscaluza. It was supposed, therefore, that the Cacique of Cosa, had gladly accompanied the Spaniards to this frontier town, in hopes of overawing his refractory subjects and even his formidable neighbour, by appearing in company with such redoubtably allies.

* Supposed to be the same with Tallasea, lying at the elbow of Talapoosa river.—M'Culloch, p. 525. Spelt in the Portuguese Narrative, Tallise.

CHAPTER IV.

The gigantic chieftain Tuscaluza—His haughty reception of the Spaniards—Great sufferings of the army for want of salt and strange malady in consequence.

1540. TUSCALUZA, the Cacique, on whose frontiers the Spaniards had now arrived, appears to have been one of the most potent, proud and warlike among the native chieftains of the south. His territories must have comprised a great part of what are now the states of the Alabama and Mississippi, and he is one of the few native heroes who have left local memorials behind them. The river Tuscaloosa,* which waters his native valley, bears his name, which has likewise been given to the capital of the state.

* Likewise called the Black Warrior River.

This chieftain had heard, with solicitude, of the Spaniards approach to his territories, and probably feared some hostility on their part, in combination with his rival, the Cacique of Cosa. He sent, therefore, his son, a youth eighteen years old, attended by a train of warriors, on an embassy to De Soto, offering him his friendship and services, and inviting him to his residence, which was about thirteen leagues from Talise. The young ambassador was of a noble stature, taller than any Spaniard or Indian in the army, and acquitted himself of his mission with great grace and courtesy. The Governor, struck with his appearance and manners, received him with great distinction; dismissing him with presents for himself and his father, and with assurances that he accepted the latter's friendship and would shortly visit him. The noble youth accordingly crossed the river with his army, in canoes and on rafts, it being too deep at Talise to be forded, and then set forward on his march, taking with him a number of the subjects of the Cacique of Cosa. The latter, being on the frontiers of his province, took a friendly leave of the Spaniards.

On the following night they encamped in a

wood, about two leagues from the village in which the Cacique of Tuscaluza was quartered, which, however, was not the capital of his province. De Soto set off at an early hour of the morning for this village, preceded by his Camp-Master-General and several of the cavaliers.

The Cacique having already received notice from his scouts, that the Spaniards were at hand, had made some preparations to receive them in state. They consequently found him posted on the crest of a hill, which commanded a wide view over a rich and beautiful valley. He was seated on a kind of stool, made of wood, somewhat concave, but without back or arms. Such was the simple throne used by the Caciques of the country. Around him stood a hundred of his principal men, dressed in rich mantles and decorated with plumes. Beside him was his standard-bearer, who bore on the end of a lance a dressed deer-skin, stretched out to the size of a buckler, of a yellow colour, and crossed by three blue stripes. It was the great banner of this warrior chieftain, and the only military standard that the Spaniards met with throughout the whole of their expedition.

Tuscaluza, or Tuscaloosa, (to adopt the mo-

dern mode of writing the name,) appeared to be about forty years of age; and his person corresponded with the formidable reputation which he bore throughout the country. Like his son he was of gigantic proportions, being a foot and a half taller than any of his attendants. His countenance was handsome, though stern, expressive of his lofty and indomitable spirit. He was broad across the shoulders, small at the waist, and so admirably formed, that the Spaniards declared him altogether the finest looking man they had ever yet beheld.

The chieftain took not the least notice of the cavaliers and officers who preceded De Soto. These sought in vain to excite his attention, by making their horses curvet and caracole as they passed, and sometimes spurred them up to his very feet. He still maintained the most imperturbable gravity, now and then casting his eyes upon them in a haughty and disdainful manner, but without condescending to utter a word.

When De Soto, however, approached, the Cacique arose and advanced fifteen or twenty paces to receive him. The Governor alighted, and having embraced him, they remained conversing, while the troops pro-

ceeded to take up the quarters allotted them, in and about the village. After this, the Cacique and the Governor proceeded, hand in hand, to the quarters prepared for the latter, which was in a house near that of Tuscaloosa. Here the Indian chief retired with his followers; but De Soto, who knew his warlike character, took care to order that a vigilant watch should be kept upon his movements.*

About this time a strange malady, which was attributed to the want of salt, broke out among the Spaniards. With some, the consequences were fatal. After a little while they were seized with a low fever, the surface of the body became discoloured and of a greenish hue, from the breast downward. At the end of three or four days, their bodies emitted a fetid odour, and they perished of a general mortification of the intestines. A few cases spread horror through the camp; for no one knew how to treat the disorder. In this dilemma some adopted a remedy or rather a preventive, recommended by the Indians; it was a lye made from the ashes of a certain herb, and used with their food, instead

* Garcilaso de la Vega, L. 3. c. 24. Portuguese Relation, c. 17.

of salt. Those who made use of this condiment escaped the fatal mortification of the bowels ; others, who rejected it as nauseous, or as the quackery of ignorant savages, fell victims to their prejudices. Some adopted it, but too late, for when the fever and its accompanying mortification had seized a patient, the lye was no longer effectual. So much did the Spaniards suffer for want of salt during their long marchings in the interior, that one of their historians attributes to this cause alone the death of more than sixty within a year.*

* Garcilaso de la Vega, L. 4. c. 3.

CHAPTER V.

Tuscaloosa, his steed and raiment—His village—Mysterious disappearance of two soldiers—Arrival at the village of Mauvila.

1540. AFTER a halt of two days, the Governor continued his march accompanied by Tuscaloosa, whom, for his own security, he kept with him. De Soto, as usual, ordered that a horse should be provided for the Cacique; but for some time they sought in vain for one of sufficient size and strength to bear so gigantic a rider. At length they found a stout hackney, belonging to the Governor, which, from its powerful frame, was used as a pack-horse; when, however, the Cacique bestrode it, his feet nearly touched the ground. The Governor had given Tuscaloosa a dress of scarlet cloth, and a flowing mantle of the same, which, with his towering plumes, added to the grandeur of his appearance,

and made him conspicuous among the steel-clad warriors around him.

After a march of thirty-six leagues, they arrived at the principal village called Tuscaloosa,* from which the province and the Cacique derived their name. Like Talise, it was situated upon a peninsula formed by the windings of the same river, which had here become wider and deeper.†

During the following day the Spaniards were busily employed in passing the stream on light rafts made of reeds and dry wood, the inhabitants not having any canoes. As the river was gentle, the troops crossed it without difficulty, but not having completed their transit until near sunset, they encamped for the night in a beautiful valley about a league beyond.

The next morning two soldiers were missing.

* This town is called Piache by the Portuguese Narrator.

† It is supposed that this was really the Alabama river, formed by the confluence of the Coosa and Talapooso, (the latter being the stream which flowed by Talise). There is a ford on the Alabama, about sixty leagues above its confluence with the Tombecbe, which the Choctaws called Taskaloussas. Here the army may have crossed. Vide M'Culloch, p. 525; Bossus' Travels in Louisiana, p. 282.

One of them, named Juan de Villalobos, was much given to wander by himself to explore the country, and it was supposed that they had strayed together, and either lost themselves in the woods or been cut off by the natives. De Soto enquired after them of the Indians who accompanied Tuscaloosa. They were abrupt and insolent in their replies. "Why do you ask us about your people?" they asked; "Are we responsible for them? Did you place them under our charge?"

The suspicions of De Soto were the more excited by these replies. He had high words with their Cacique on the subject, and threatened to detain him until the Spaniards should be produced. Seeing this menace was of no avail, the Governor concluded that the soldiers had been massacred; but dissembled his indignation for the present, lest he should create difficulties and delay his progress. He continued his march, therefore, in company with Tuscaloosa, apparently on amicable terms, though they were secretly distrustful of each other, and the Cacique felt that he was a kind of prisoner. In the course of their march, Tuscaloosa despatched one of his people to a town called

Mauvila,* under pretext of ordering a supply of provisions and Indian attendants for the army. On the third day, as they drew near to Mauvila, their route lay through a very populous country. At a very early hour the next morning, De Soto summoned two confidential men, named Gonzalo Quadrado Xaramillo, and Diego Vazquez, sent them in advance, with orders to enter the village, observe what was going on, and there await his arrival.

Assembling a hundred horse and a hundred foot as a vanguard, he then set off with these for the village, ordering Luis de Moscoso, the Camp-Master General, to follow speedily with the remainder of the forces. The Cacique Tuscaloosa, accompanied the Governor; being evidently retained as a kind of hostage.

About eight o'clock in the morning of October the 18th, they arrived before Mauvila.† This was the Cacique's strong hold, where

* Maville, in the Portuguese account.

† This town is supposed to have stood on the north side of the Alabama, about the junction of that river with the Tombecbe, within a hundred miles from Pensacola. There is little doubt that it gave the name to the present river and bay of Mobile. The letters *v* and *b* are

he and his principal warriors resided; and being on the frontiers of his territories, it was strongly fortified. It stood in a fine plain, surrounded by a high wall formed of huge trunks of trees driven into the ground, side by side, and wedged together. These were crossed within and without by others smaller and longer, bound to them by bands made of split reeds and wild vines. The whole was thickly plastered over with a kind of mortar, made of clay and straw trampled together, which filled up every chink and crevice of the wood-work, appearing as if

often used indifferently in Spanish, in place of each other, and articulated in nearly the same manner. Charlevoix, in his *Journal Historique*, Let. 33, p. 452, says: "Garcilaso de la Vega, dans son *Histoire de la Floride*, parle d'une Bourgade appelée *Mauvila*, laquelle a sans doute donnée son nom à la Rivière, et à la nation, qui était établie sur ses bords. Ces Mauviliens étaient alors très-puissans; à peine en reste-t-il aujourd'hui quelques vestiges." In the account of these marchings, and of the affairs at Mauvila, I have collated the narratives of the Inca and the Portuguese author, and have availed myself of both accounts, where they were not totally irreconcilable. The Inca, as usual, is much the most minute, graphic and characteristic, and supports his main authority in various places, by extracts from the journals of the two soldiers.

smoothed with a trowel. Throughout its whole circuit, the wall was pierced with loop-holes, from whence arrows might be discharged at an enemy, and at every fifty paces it was surmounted by a tower, capable of holding seven or eight fighting men. Numbers of the trees which had been driven into the ground had taken root, and flourished, springing up out of the rampart, and spreading their branches above it, so as to form a circle of foliage round the village. There were but two gates to the place, one to the east the other to the west. In the centre was a large square, around which the principal dwellings were erected. The whole number of houses in the place did not exceed eighty, but they were of large size, capable of lodging from five to fifteen hundred persons each. They were built after the Indian fashion, not divided into apartments, but consisting simply of one great hall, like a church; and as they belonged either to the Cacique or to his principal subjects, they were constructed with more than usual skill.*

* This description of Mauvila is entirely from the Inca.

CHAPTER VI.

The disastrous battle of Mauvila.

1540. **WHEN** the Governor and his van-guard appeared before the town, a splendid train of warriors came forth to receive them, painted, decorated and clad in robes of skins and flaunting feathers of every brilliant colour. This cavalcade advanced singing and dancing, and playing on rude instruments of music. To these succeeded a band of young damsels, beautiful in form and feature, as the natives of this part of the country generally were.

In this way the Governor entered the village, side by side with the Cacique in his flaming mantle of scarlet, followed by a train of horsemen in glittering armour, and preceded by groups of Indians dancing. Having reached the square, they alighted, the Governor

ordering that the horses should be taken outside the village and tethered until quarters were provided for them. The Cacique then addressing Juan Ortiz, the interpreter, pointed out one of the largest houses which had been prepared for De Soto and his principal officers, and an adjacent one for his servants and attendants. The rest of the troops were lodged in cabins of bark and branches, constructed for their reception about a bow shot without the walls. The Governor, although not well pleased with an arrangement which would separate him from his troops, replied, that it should be attended to when the Camp-Master arrived. The Cacique then signified a wish to be left to himself, but was given to understand that he must continue with De Soto. The haughty spirit of Tuscaloosa warmed at being thus kept in thralldom. He told De Soto that he might depart in peace whenever he pleased; but that he must not attempt to carry him out of his dominions. So saying, he entered a house where some of his subjects were assembled, armed with bows and arrows. The moment he was gone, Gonzalo Quadrado Xaramillo, one of the cavaliers who had been sent forward to observe the movements of the

Indians, approached the Governor, and reported that various circumstances had led him to suspect some dark and treacherous plot. He stated that, in the few houses within sight, more than ten thousand chosen warriors were assembled; not one of them old, or of the servile class, but all fighting men, young, noble, and well armed; and that many of the houses were filled with weapons. Not a child was to be found in the place; and though there were many females, they were all young girls. The inhabitants, too, had been diligently employed in strengthening the palisades round the town, and in clearing the fields, for a considerable distance round the village. The very roots and herbage had been pulled up by the hand as if to clear the ground for battle.

The Governor reflecting for a moment, directed word to be passed secretly from one to the other, among the troopers, to hold themselves ready for action. He also charged Xaramillo to communicate all that he had observed to the Master of the Camp, the moment he should arrive, in order that he might make his arrangements accordingly. Meanwhile he determined to observe a friendly demeanour, and endeavour

to conciliate the Cacique by courteous treatment.

Word was now brought to the Governor that his servants had prepared the morning's meal in one of the houses which looked upon the square; he immediately sent Juan Ortiz to invite Tuscaloosa to the repast, as they had been accustomed to eat together.

Juan Ortiz presented himself at the door of the large house into which the Cacique had entered, but several Indians met him at the threshold and refused him admittance. The message he brought was passed in to their chief, and word returned that he would come to the Governor immediately.

Some time having elapsed without his appearing, Juan Ortiz delivered a second message, and received a similar reply. After another interval, he returned a third time, and called out, "Tell Tuscaloosa to come forth; the food is upon the table, and the Governor is waiting for him."

Upon this, an Indian who appeared to be the General, stepped from the threshold. He was in a furious heat, and his eyes flashed fire. "Who are these robbers! these vagabonds!" he cried, "who keep calling to my

Chief, Tuscaloosa, come forth! come forth! with as little reverence as if he were one of them? By the sun and moon! this insolence is no longer to be borne. Let us cut them to pieces on the spot, and put an end to their tyranny."

Scarcely had he spoken these words, when a follower stepped up behind him, and placed in his hand a bow and arrows. The Indian General threw from his shoulders the folds of a superb mantle of martin skins, which was buttoned round his neck, and baring his arm, drew to the head an arrow, levelled at a knot of Spaniards in the square. Before he had time to wing the shaft, a blow from the sword of Baltazar de Gallegos laid open the whole of the side exposed by throwing back his mantle: his entrails gushed out, and he fell dead on the spot.*

His son, a youth of eighteen, of noble demeanour, sprang forward to avenge his death, and discharged six or seven arrows as fast as he could draw them; but seeing that they struck harmless upon the armour of Gallegos, he took his bow in both hands, and closing with the Spaniard, gave him three or four blows on the

* Portuguese Narrative, c. 13.

head, with such rapidity and force, that the blood spouted from beneath his casque, and ran over his forehead. Gallegos, as soon as he could recover from the surprise, gave the savage two thrusts in the breast with his sword, that laid him dead at his feet.

The war-whoop now rang through the village. Multitudes of warriors ready armed, poured from every house, and attacked the Spaniards who were scattered about the principal street. Though overwhelmed by numbers, the Spaniards kept a bold face to the enemy, fighting stoutly, and disputing the ground inch by inch, until they retreated out of the capital, leaving five of their number slain.

Numbers of the cavalry who had tethered their horses outside the walls, and returned into the street, seeing the furious onset of the natives, ran out of the gate to the places where their steeds were tied. Those who made most speed were enabled to mount. Some who lingered, had only time to cut the reins or halters of their horses and drive them off; while others, still more pressed, were obliged to abandon them to their fate; having the grief of seeing them shot by innumerable arrows, amidst the exulting yells of the savages.

The enemy being in great force, divided into two bands; one to encounter the retreating Spaniards, the other to kill their horses, and gather the baggage and effects of the army, which had by this time arrived, and lay heaped under the wall and about the fields. Every thing thus fell into the enemy's hands, except the baggage of Andres de Vasconcellos which had not yet been brought up. The spoils were conveyed by the Indians into their capital with great triumph, and put into their houses. They knocked off the chains of the slaves who carried the baggage of the Spanish army, and gave them weapons to fight with.

Meanwhile the few cavaliers who had been able to mount their horses, together with some troopers, just arrived from the main body, united their forces and endeavoured to protect their comrades who were fighting on foot. The approach of the cavalry checked the impetuosity of the Indians and afforded time for the Spaniards to rally and form themselves into two bodies, one of horse the other of foot. They then charged the enemy with a fury, inspired by their recent maltreatment, and drove them back into the village, whither they would have followed them, but were assailed with such

showers of stones and arrows from the wall and loop holes, that they were compelled to draw back.

The savages seeing them retreat, again rushed forth, some by the gate, others letting themselves down from the wall; and closing with their enemies, seized hold of the very lances of the horsemen, struggling with them until drawn more than two hundred paces from the wall.

In this way, they fought backwards and forwards, for three hours without intermission; the Spaniards always standing by each other and keeping their front to the enemy, in which alone consisted their safety, being so few in number. They found, however, that they suffered too severely when near the village, from the missiles launched from the wall, and that their best chance was in the open fields where they had room to manage their horses and wield their lances.

Throughout all these attacks and defences, Baltazar de Gallegos,—the same who had struck the first blow in the battle,—was ever in front, and in the hottest of the fight. His perilous deeds were anxiously watched from afar, by his brother, Fray Juan de Gallegos, a worthy Dominican friar. Mounted on horseback, in his

monk's dress, with a broad clerical hat on his head, he hovered about the skirts of the battle, spurring after the squadron in its attacks, wheeling round and galloping off in its retreats. The worthy friar was not a fighting man; his only object was to call his brother out of the affray, and mount him on the horse which he bestrode, that he might fight with more effect and less danger.

The bold Baltazar, however, heeded not his brother's calls. Considering that his honour would not permit him to leave his post, he continued fighting on foot. At length, the peculiar dress of the priest, and his loud and repeated calls to his brother, attracted the notice of the enemy, who probably supposed him some chieftain encouraging his soldiers. Accordingly, in one of the retreats, as the friar's broad back was turned upon the foe, and he was galloping off at full speed, an Indian warrior sped a shaft with so true an aim, that, though at a great distance, it struck him between the shoulders. Fortunately, he was protected by the two hoods of his dress, which lay in thick folds upon his back; his broad hat also, secured by a cord under his chin, had fallen back in his flight, and hung like a shield upon his shoul-

ders; the arrow, therefore, met with so much resistance as to make but a slight wound. It however damped the fraternal zeal of the spiritual warrior, who from that time kept himself at a wary distance from the battle.

A harder fate befell Don Carlos Enriquez, a youthful cavalier, who had married a niece of the Adelantado, and was beloved by the whole army for his urbanity and his virtues. From the commencement of the battle he had fought valiantly, and was conspicuous in every assault. In the last charge his horse was wounded in the breast by an arrow, which remained buried in the flesh. As soon as the squadron had retreated, Don Carlos endeavoured to draw forth the shaft. Passing his lance from his right to his left hand, he leaned forward, and stooping over the neck of his horse, seized the dart, and endeavoured to pull it forth. In his exertion, he leaned so much on one side as to expose his neck, the only part of his person unprotected by armour. In an instant, an arrow, tipped with flint, came with the swiftness of lightning, buried itself in his throat, and the poor youth fell from his horse mortally wounded, though he did not expire until the following day.

The Spaniards suffered severely in these repeated conflicts; but their loss was nothing in comparison with that of the Indians, who had no defensive armour, and on whom every blow was effective. Seeing what advantage the Spaniards derived from their horses in the open field, their enemies now shut themselves up within their village, closing the gates and manning the ramparts.

Upon this the Governor ordered the cavalry, being the best armed, to dismount, and taking bucklers for their defence, and battle-axes in their hands, to break open the gates, and strive to take the village by storm.

In an instant a band of two hundred resolute cavaliers dashed forward to the assault. The savages received them valiantly, and beat them back several times. The gate, however, was soon broken open and the Spaniards rushed in, pell-mell, amidst a shower of darts and stones. The opening being too narrow to admit them all readily, some attacked the wall with their axes; quickly demolished the frail facing of clay and straw, and laying bare the cross-beams and their fastenings, assisted each other to scramble up by them, and thus got into the village to the aid of their comrades.

The savages fought desperately, both in the streets and from the tops of houses. The Spaniards, galled by missiles from the latter, and fearful that their enemies would retake the houses already gained, set them on fire. Being composed of reeds and other combustible materials, they were soon wrapped in flames and smoke, which added to the horror of the scene.

While this conflict was raging in one part of the village, a kind of siege was going on in another. The moment they had closed their gates, the enemy turned their attention to the large house in the square, which had been assigned for the use of the Governor's retinue, and in which all his camp equipage was deposited. They had not assailed it before, supposing it to be in their power : they now, therefore, repaired to it merely to share the spoils, but to their surprise, found it strongly defended. Within were three cross-bowmen, five halberdiers of the Governor's guard, who usually accompanied his camp equipage, and an Indian, armed with bow and arrows, who had been made prisoner by the Spaniards on their first landing, and had ever since proved faithful to them. Besides these fighting men, there were a priest, a friar, and two

slaves belonging to the Governor. One and all defended the house stoutly; the laymen with their weapons, the priests with their devotions. The savages tried in vain to gain the portal. They then mounted on the roof, and made an opening in three or four places; but so well did the cross-bowmen and the Indian ply their weapons, that when an enemy showed himself at any of the openings, he was immediately transfixed by an arrow.

Thus did this little garrison maintain a desperate and almost hopeless defence, until De Soto and his followers having fought their way into the village, as has been mentioned, arrived at the door of the dwelling, and dispersed its assailants. The fighting portion of the garrison mingled with their comrades and continued the strife; the clerical portion took refuge in the fields, where they could carry on their spiritual warfare with equal vigour and more security.

The wild and mingled affray had now lasted four hours, but nothing could quell the fury of the Indians, who disdained either to yield or ask quarter. Many of the Spaniards, exhausted by the fierce strife, fainting and choked with thirst, ran to a pool of water, crimsoned with the blood of the dead and

dying, and having refreshed themselves, hastened back and rushed again into the battle*.

De Soto had hitherto fought on foot, but as usual, waxing hot with his exertions, he hastened out of the village, seized a horse, sprang into the saddle, and followed by Nuño Tobar, galloped back into the square, lance in hand, shouting the battle-cry of "Our Lady and Santiago!" Calling out to the Spaniards to make way for him, he dashed among the thickest of the enemy;—Tobar followed. They spurred their chargers up and down, through the multitude in the square and principal street; trampling down some, lancing others right and left, and leaving a track of carnage wherever they passed.

In this wild *mêlée*, as the Governor rose in his stirrups to pierce an Indian, another, who was behind, aimed at the part exposed between the saddle and the cuirass, and buried an arrow in his thigh. In the confusion of the combat, De Soto had no time to extract the arrow, which remained rankling in the wound for several hours, during which time, though unable to sit in his saddle, he continued fighting

* Portuguese Narrative, c. 19.

on horseback ; “ a proof,” says the Inca Garcilaso, “ not merely of his valour, but of his good horsemanship.”

Meanwhile the fire was raging through the village, and making horrible ravages among the enemy. Those who continued within doors were consumed by the flames or stifled by the smoke : those who fought from the roofs, were either cut off by the fire, or obliged to throw themselves down. Many women and children perished in their dwellings.

At one time, a strong wind swept both flames and smoke along the street upon the Indians, who, while thus blinded and bewildered, were charged by their enemies and driven back ; but the wind veering, favoured them in turn, and they soon regained all the ground they had lost.

Maddened at seeing their ranks thinned, and their warriors lying slaughtered in heaps, the savages called upon their women to seize the weapons of the slain and revenge their death. Many had already been fighting by the side of their husbands, but on this appeal every one rushed to the conflict. Some armed themselves with the swords, lances and partisans of the Spanish soldiery, who had been either killed or disarmed, and thus wounded them

with their own weapons ; others seized bows and arrows, which they plied with strength and skill almost equal with that of their husbands. In their fury, they threw themselves before the men, and even rushed upon the weapons of their enemies ; for the courage of woman, when once roused, is fierce and desperate, and her spirit more reckless and vehement than that man. The Spaniards, however, having consideration for their sex, and pity for their despair, abstained from slaying or wounding them.

CHAPTER VII.

Fall of Tuscaloosa.

1540. WHILE the battle was thus raging at Mauvila, Luis de Moscoso, Master of the Camp, was loitering by the way with his forces. Instead of speedily following the vanguard led by De Soto, he had sallied forth late from his encampment and permitted his men to scatter themselves about the fields, hunting and amusing themselves. So long a time having now elapsed since they experienced any hostility from the natives, they had lost all fear and precaution.

In this way, they straggled negligently and tardily forward, unsuspecting of danger. At length, those in front heard the distant clangour of trumpet and drum, mingled with the yells and shouts of combatants, and beheld a column of smoke rising in the air.

Suspecting the cause, they passed the alarm, from mouth to mouth, to those who were behind, and pressed forward with all speed to the scene of action. It was late in the afternoon before they reached it.

Among the foremost who arrived before the village, was Diego de Soto, nephew to the Governor. Learning the fate of his cousin Don Carlos Enriquez, to whom he was tenderly attached, he vowed to revenge his death. Throwing himself from his horse, and seizing a buckler, he rushed into the village, sword in hand, and plunged into the thickest of the fight. Scarcely, however, had he entered, when an arrow pierced his eye and came out at the back of his head. He fell to the earth, without uttering a word, and died the following day in great agony. His death added to the affliction which the army felt for that of his brave cousin. The two young friends and relations, thus united in death, were generous spirits, worthy alike of each others' affection, and of such an uncle.

When the rear-guard arrived at the village, great numbers of the savages were fighting in the adjacent fields, where the ground had been cleared and prepared for action. The Spaniards

assailed them vigorously, and had a long and obstinate combat; for many of the native warriors had clambered over the walls, and advanced into the field. At length the Indians were routed and fled. Being pursued by the horsemen, few escaped destruction.

Although it was now near the hour of sunset, the shouts and battle cries of the combatants still arose from the burning village. As yet, from want of space, no horseman had fought within the walls, except De Soto and Nuño Tobar; but now a great number of cavalry dashed in at the gate, dispersing themselves through the streets, routing and killing all the natives they encountered.

Ten or twelve cavaliers spurred up the main street, where the battle was hottest, and coming upon the rear of a body of Indians, male and female, who were fighting with the fury of demons, broke through them with such impetuosity, as not merely to overturn them, but also several of the Spaniards with whom they were contending. The carnage was horrible, for the savages refused to surrender or lay down their arms, but fought until all were slain.

Thus ended this sanguinary struggle, which

had continued during nine hours. The village was a smoking ruin, covered with slain, and victory declared for the Spaniards, just as the sun went down. The last Indian warrior that wielded a weapon, was one of those who fought in the village. He was so blinded by fury, as to be unconscious of the fate of his comrades, until glancing his eye around, he beheld them all lying dead. Seeing further contest hopeless, he turned to fly, and reaching the wall, sprang lightly to the top, thinking to escape into the fields. Here, however, to his dismay, he beheld squadrons of horse and foot below him, and the field covered with his slaughtered countrymen. Escape was impossible; death or slavery awaited him. In his despair, he snatched the string from his bow, passed it round his neck, and fastening the other end to a branch of one of the trees that grew out of the rampart, threw himself from the wall and was strangled before the Spaniards had time to prevent the catastrophe.

Such was the deadly battle of Mauvila, one of the most sanguinary, considering the number of combatants, which had occurred among the discoveries of the new world. Forty-two Spaniards fell in the conflict; eighteen of them

received their fatal wounds either in the eyes or mouth, for the Indians finding their bodies cased in armour, aimed at their faces. There scarcely remained a Spaniard that was not more or less wounded, some in many places. Thirteen died before their wounds could be dressed, and twenty-two after, so that in all eighty-two perished. To this loss must be added that of forty-two horses killed by the enemy, and mourned by the Spaniards as if they had been so many fellow soldiers.

Among the Indians, the havoc was almost incredible. Several thousand are said to have perished by fire and sword. The plain around the village was strewn with more than twenty-five hundred bodies. Within the walls the streets were blocked up with dead. A great number of persons were destroyed in their houses by fire. In one building alone a thousand perished, the flames having entered by the door, prevented their escape, and thus all were either burnt or suffocated: the greater part were females.

Without the walls, the body of Tusealoosa the younger was found among the slain; but the fate of his father was never satisfactorily ascertained. According to the Por-

tuguese narrative, several Indian prisoners affirmed, that on the grand assault of the village by De Soto and his horsemen, Tuscaloosa's warriors entreated him to withdraw from the conflict, and put himself into a place of security, in order that, should they perish in battle, as all had resolved to do, rather than turn their backs, he might survive to govern the country. The proud Cacique at first resisted their entreaties, but at length overcome by their urgent supplications, he fled from the ill-fated town, accompanied by a small body of natives, carrying with him his scarlet mantle and the choicest things he could find among the Spanish baggage. According to the Inca, however, the account generally believed by the Spaniards was that he had perished in the flames; and this, in fact, is most consistent with his haughty and patriotic spirit, which would scarcely permit him to survive so ruinous a defeat, and desert his capital and people, in the moment of their most imminent peril. He was evidently one of the bravest as well as proudest and most potent of the native princes. His name is still heard in that land which he loved so well, and defended so desperately; and it is a name

which deserves to be held in veneration as that of a hero, and a patriot.

NOTE.—The Inca and the Portuguese historian differ widely in their estimate of the killed and wounded in this action. Garcilaso de la Vega states the loss of the Spaniards to have been eighty-two, and of the Indians above eleven thousand. The Portuguese Narrator states the Spanish loss to have been eighteen killed and one hundred and fifty wounded, and of the Indians twenty-five hundred slain; which is the number stated by the Inca to have been killed in the battle outside the town. The statement of the Inca is given more in detail, and apparently with a more intimate knowledge of facts; having the statements of three several eye witnesses, from which to make up his account. That of the Portuguese is more vague and general. The estimate of the Inca may be somewhat exaggerated; yet it must be taken into consideration that the Mauvilians were a numerous and powerful tribe, and joined in this battle by the warriors of neighbouring provinces. Their number must consequently have been very great. It is stated by both writers that they all fought to the last gasp, so that the slaughter was no doubt prodigious. In so desperate and protracted a conflict, the number of eighty-two slain on the part of the Spaniards, appears much more probable than that of eighteen.

CHAPTER VIII.

The plight of the Spaniards after the battle of Mauvila.

1540. THE situation of the Spaniards after the battle of Mauvila was truly deplorable. Most of them were severely wounded,—all exhausted by fatigue and hunger. The village was reduced to ashes around them, and the whole of their baggage with its supplies of food and medicine had been destroyed.

The first care of De Soto, though badly wounded himself was for his troops. Having ordered that the dead should be collected together for interment on the following day, he directed that immediate relief should be administered to the wounded. Here, however, was the difficulty. There was but one surgeon in the army, and he slow and unskilful. There were at least seventeen hundred grievous wounds, requiring a surgeon's care; several

having fallen to the share of a single soldier. The mere flesh wounds were left for the patient himself to cure; but those in the joints, and other critical parts, which threatened to maim and disable the patient, required more skilful attention. Unfortunately, they had no ointments nor medicines of any kind, nor linen for bandages; all had been consumed. Not even shelter was to be found from the cold and night-dews, for not a house in the village remained standing. At length branches of trees having been brought from the cabins erected without the village, sheds were put up against such of the walls as still stood. Under these the wounded were conveyed for shelter, and straw spread for their reception. Those who had been least harmed, exerted themselves to relieve their suffering companions. Some opened the bodies of the dead Indians, and converted their fat into ointment; others took off their own shirts and those of their slaughtered comrades, to make bandages for the disabled. As these were of linen, they were set apart for the severest wounds; those which were slight, the Spaniards bound with the doublets of their slain comrades, and lining of their hose, or other materials of a coarser kind.

The horses which had been killed were cut up, and their flesh preserved for the sustenance of the wounded. In spite of every exertion, however, many Spaniards died miserably, before any relief could be administered to them. Thus passed that wretched night, amid bitter lamentations and dying groans. Such as were able to bear arms, patrolled both the camp and village, maintaining a vigilant watch, in case of an assault.

The wounded Spaniards remained eight days in these miserable shelters. They were then removed to those cabins which their enemies had erected without the walls, where they had more comfortable quarters. Here fifteen more days were passed. During this period, the least disabled sallied forth on foraging expeditions, confining these to a circuit of about four leagues, and found abundant supplies of provisions in the numerous deserted hamlets scattered about the country.

In every thicket and ravine they discovered dead or dying Indians, who had not been able to reach their homes. Many also, had taken shelter in the hamlets, and lay there, apparently without any one to minister to their necessities. It was understood, however, that their friends

brought them nourishment by night, but returned to their retreats in the forests before dawn. The Spaniards treated these poor savages with kindness, sharing their food with them.

In foraging the woods, the troopers captured fifteen or twenty natives. On being asked whether their people were meditating another attack, they replied, that their bravest warriors having fallen in the late battle, none were left to make war. Their information appeared to be true; for, during all the time the Spaniards remained in this neighbourhood, no Indian ventured near their camp.

From the prisoners thus taken, and others captured in different villages, they enquired concerning the past stratagems and design of Tuscaloosa, which had produced such mischief.

That implacable and warlike chieftain, from the time he first heard of the Spaniards' approach towards his dominions, had meditated their destruction. With that object, he had sent his son, accompanied by a train of warriors, to watch their movements; and had engaged the natives of several contiguous provinces to join in the plot, promising to share with them the spoils of conquest.

The women, too, most of whom had accompanied their husbands and lovers from the neighbouring districts, declared they had been enticed to Mauvila, by promises of rich robes of scarlet cloth, silks, linen and velvet, with which to decorate themselves for their dances. They were to have had horses, on which to ride in triumph, and Spaniards to wait upon them as slaves. Many came for the purpose of being present at a great feast, others to participate in the rejoicings intended to be held after their victory, and to witness the exploits of their lovers.

On arriving at the village with the Adelantado, Tuscaloosa had held a council with his principal warriors, in which it was debated whether they should attack the van-guard which had already arrived, or wait until the whole should be within their power. It is probable that the Indian General's heat and impatience caused the plot to explode before the appointed time.

It has been shown that the Spaniards lost all their baggage and private effects in the conflagration of the village. What gave them the greatest concern, however, was the loss of a small portion of wine and of wheaten flour

which they had carefully preserved for the performance of mass. All the sacerdotal dresses, together with the chalices, and other articles of worship were destroyed; but the loss of the wheaten flour was irreparable. Consultations were held between the ecclesiastics and laymen, whether bread made of maize might not be adopted in case of extremity; it was however decided, that the use of any thing but wheat was contrary to the canons of the church.

From this time therefore, on Sundays and on Saints' days an altar was prepared, and the priest officiated, arrayed in robes of dressed deerskins, fashioned in imitation of his sacerdotal dresses; performing all parts of the ceremony, except consecrating the bread and wine. This constituted what the Spaniard called "a dry mass."

CHAPTER IX.

De Soto becomes an altered man, and why—The Adelantado breaks up his encampment at Mauvila—Manner of crossing a river—The pass stoutly defended by the Indians.

1540. WHILE encamped at the village of Mauvila, overwhelmed with care and anxiety, De Soto was unexpectedly cheered by tidings that ships with white men on board had arrived on the sea-coast toward which he was shaping his course. He had heard a rumour of this kind before the battle, and it was confirmed by some prisoners taken in the village. He further learnt from them, that the bay of Achusi, where he had directed Gomez Arias and Diego Maldonado to cast anchor was not more than seven days' journey distant.* He doubted not, therefore, that the ships in question were com-

* Portuguese Narrative, c. 19. The Inca states the distance at about thirty leagues.

manded by those officers, and brought reinforcements and supplies from Spain for his projected settlement. He now considered himself on the eve of accomplishing his wishes ;—of founding that colony which would assure the possession of the country he had explored, and enable him to pursue with advantage his search for gold.

He had brought with him thus far the Cacique made prisoner by Maldonado at the port of Achusi. He had always treated him with great kindness, but had not sent him to his home because of the distance and the hazard he would incur of being killed or captured by the way. Learning, however, that the road was now secure, he granted him permission to return ; at the same time, earnestly charging him to preserve the friendship of the Spaniards who would soon be residents in his country. The Cacique departed with expressions of gratitude for the kindness he had experienced, and assurances to the Governor that he would be happy to welcome him to his territory.

While De Soto regarded the ships as the means of conquest and colonization, many of his followers only looked forward to their arrival as supplying the means of escape out of a

disastrous country. Some of them had been engaged in the Conquest of Peru, and contrasted the wealth of that golden empire with the poverty of the land through which they had recently struggled, where neither gold nor silver was to be found; and they did not fail to dwell upon this contrast when conversing with their companions. The Spaniards generally were disheartened by the disasters of the recent battle, and the implacable fierceness displayed by the natives. They saw that such a people were not to be easily subjugated. Instead, therefore, of wearing themselves out in this unpromising land, it seemed better to seek other countries already conquered, and abounding with wealth as Mexico and Peru, where they might enrich themselves with less risk and less toil. For these reasons they determined on reaching the sea shore, to abandon Florida and seek their fortunes in New Spain.

Secret information of these rumours was brought to De Soto by some of his most devoted followers. He could scarcely credit it, and went through the camp at night, alone and in disguise, to ascertain the truth. In this way he overheard a conversation in the hut of Juan Gaytan, the treasurer, in which that cavalier

and several of his comrades expressed their determination to abandon the enterprise, and either sail for Mexico or Peru, or return to Spain in the ships at Achusi.

DeSoto stood aghast at hearing these resolves. He saw that his present force would disband the moment his followers could shift for themselves; and he was aware that it would be impossible for him to raise a new army. He had no booty of gold and silver to display with which to tempt new adventurers; and the specimens of pearls which he had intended to send to Cuba were all lost in the conflagration of Mauvila. Should his present forces desert him, therefore, he would be stripped of his dignity and command, blasted in reputation, his fortune would be expended in vain, and his enterprise, which had cost so much toil and trouble, a subject of scoffing rather than of renown. De Soto was a man extremely jealous of his honour; and as he reflected upon these gloomy prospects, they produced sudden and desperate resolves. He disguised his anger and his knowledge of the schemes he had overheard; but determined to frustrate them by turning his back upon the coast, and striking again into the interior,

He resolved neither to seek the ships, nor furnish any tidings of himself until he should have completed his enterprise gloriously, by discovering new regions of wealth like those of Peru and Mexico.*

A change came over De Soto from this day. He was frustrated in his favourite scheme of colonization, and had lost confidence in his followers. Instead of manifesting his usual frankness, energy, and alacrity, he became a moody, irritable, discontented man. He no longer attempted to strike out any great undertaking, but stung with secret disappointment, wandering recklessly from place to place, apparently without order or object, as if careless both of time and of life, and only anxious to terminate his existence.

1540. It was on Sunday, the 18th of November, that De Soto, finding his troops sufficiently recovered from their wounds to bear the march, broke up his encampment at Mauvila, and turned his face to the northward, to penetrate provinces which he had not yet visited. His feelings and motives for thus

* It was a Sunday. Garcilaso de la Vega, *L.* 3, c. 22. Portuguese Relation, c. 19.

turning his back upon the sea-coast, he kept to himself. He was always a man strict and peremptory in exacting military obedience, and if his troops murmured at the route he chose, it is probable they were overawed and reduced to tacit submission, by the increased sternness of his manner.

The soldiers were provided with two days provisions of maize, yet they were five days traversing a pleasant though uninhabited country:—upon the sixth they entered the province of Chicaza*. The first village at which they arrived was called Cabusto. It was the largest in the province, and situated on a river, wide and deep, with high banks†.

The Governor, as usual, sent offers of peace to the inhabitants, who rejected them with scorn. “War is what we desire,” was the reply, “a war of fire and blood.” Approaching the village, the Spaniards saw more than fifteen hundred warriors drawn out before it. These skirmished with them for a time, but, overpowered by the fury of their attack, fled to the

* The Portuguese Narrator says, they entered into the province of Pafallaya.

† Supposed to be the Black Warrior, or Tuscaloosa river.

river. Some sprang into canoes, others plunged into the water, and thus soon crossed to the opposite bank, where their main force, to the number of eight thousand warriors, was posted to dispute the passage.

The Spaniards found the village perfectly stripped and abandoned. The inhabitants had sent off all their effects, together with their wives and children, and were prepared for war. They determined to risk no open battle, but to dispute the pass of the river, which, on account of its depth and high banks, they could easily do. For this purpose they had stretched their forces two leagues along the bank, hoping to compel the army to take a different route.

When night closed in, the Indians annoyed their enemies greatly, by sudden attacks and frequent alarms. They crossed the river in their canoes at different places, and then, uniting in a band, attacked De Soto's camp. The Spaniards made use of stratagem in their defence. There were three landing places where the natives disembarked. Here the Spaniards dug pits, in which a party of archers and arquebusiers concealed themselves. As soon as they saw the Indians leap on shore and

quit their canoes, their ambushed enemies rushed out, sword in hand, and cut off their retreat. Three several times they repeated this successfully, after which the savages did not again attempt to land, but contented themselves with vigilantly guarding the passage of the river.

The Governor now ordered one hundred of the most skilful men, to build two large boats or piraguas, nearly flat, and very spacious. That the enemy might not perceive their operations, he directed them to be built in a forest, a league and a half further up the river, and about a league from its banks,

So assiduous were the workmen, that in twelve days the piraguas were finished. In order to transport them to the river, two carriages were constructed, on which they were drawn by mules and horses, and pushed forward by men, who in the most difficult places carried the vessels on their shoulders. In this way, one morning, before daybreak, they were conveyed to the water and launched, where there were convenient landing-places on either bank.

De Soto, who was present at the launching of these boats, ordered ten horse and forty foot soldiers to embark in each, and hasten to cross

the stream before their enemies should assemble to oppose them. The infantry were to row, and the horsemen to keep their saddles, that they might not lose time in mounting when they should reach the opposite shore.

Notwithstanding the silence observed by the Spaniards in launching their boats, they were discovered by a band of about five hundred savages drawn up on the other side. These gave a loud yell by way of spreading alarm, and rushed down to dispute the landing.

The Spaniards, fearing their enemies might collect in greater numbers, hurried to embark. De Soto would have gone in the first boat, but his followers prevented his exposing himself to this unnecessary hazard.

Those in the first bark bent to their oars and quickly reached the opposite bank, amid a shower of arrows, by which every Spaniard was more or less wounded. The first horseman who leaped on shore was Diego Garcia, and close behind him followed Gonzalo Silvestre; they charged the enemy together, put them to flight, and pursued them for more than two hundred paces. Fearful of being surrounded, they then turned their horses, and spurred back to their companions. In this manner, now

charging, now retreating, these hardy cavaliers fought alone for a short time; in the fifth charge, however, being joined by some horsemen, they were enabled to keep the Indians in check.

The moment the infantry landed, they took shelter in a hamlet close by; this they dared not quit, as their number was very small, and every soldier more or less hurt. While this was passing, the second boat, in which De Soto had embarked, was carried down the current. The troops attempted to land, but found it impracticable on account of the steep banks; they were, therefore, compelled to pull up the stream, with great labour, to the landing place, which by this time was cleared of the enemy. The Governor, followed by seventy or eighty Spaniards, leaped on shore, and hastened to the relief of those who were fighting on the plain.

On their approach, the Indians retreated, and seeing the Spaniards had effected a landing, collected their forces, and fortified themselves with palisades, in a swamp covered with reeds, from which they made frequent sallies. They were, however, as often driven back, and lanced by the cavalry. Thus the day passed in unim-

portant skirmishes. The troops finally crossed the river without molestation, and at night-fall every Indian disappeared*.

* Garcilaso de la Vega. Lib. 3. c. 35. Portuguese Narrator, c. 20.

CHAPTER X.

De Soto sends a messenger to the natives with offers of peace—His treatment—Encamps in a Chickasaw village—Two soldiers condemned to death—The desperate battle of Chicaza.

1540. THE country in the neighbourhood of the river was level and fertile, dotted here and there with small hamlets, in which were quantities of maize and dried pulse. Having broken up the piraguas for the sake of the nails, the army resumed its march, and after travelling five days through a desert country, came to another river,* where the Indians were assembled to dispute the passage. Unwilling to expose his men to further loss, De Soto halted for two days, until a canoe had been con-

* Supposed to be the Tombigbe.

structed, in which he sent over an Indian messenger to the Cacique, with offers of peace and friendship. The savages seized their countryman, massacred him on the banks of the river in sight of the Spaniards, and then, as if triumphing in their barbarity, dispersed with horrid yells.*

There being no longer any enemy to oppose his passage, De Soto conducted his troops across the stream, and then marched onward, until, on the 18th of December, he arrived at the village of Chicaza, from which the province took its name.† It stood upon a gentle hill,

* Portuguese Narrative, c. 20.

† Considering the nature of the country through which the Spanish army passed, agreeing with the modern accounts of that region, the direction of the march, the time, and the distance, it is very evident that this was the country of the Chickasaws, in the upper part of the state of Mississippi; and this village probably stood on the western bank of the Yazoo, a branch of the Mississippi, about eighty leagues to the northwest of Mobile. Charlevoix remarks, "Garcilaso de la Vega parle des Chicachas dans son Histoire de la Conquête de la Floride, et il les place à peu près au même endroit, ou ils sont encore présentement."—Vide Charlevoix, Jour. Hist. Let. 29, p. 408.—Belknap's Am. Biography, v. 1. p. 191.—Flint's Geog. and Hist. of the Mississippi, v. 1. p. 496.

stretching from north to south, being watered on each side by a small stream, and bordered by groves of walnut and oak trees.

The weather was now severe. A great deal of snow had fallen ; this having frozen, the troops suffered extremely in their encampments. The Governor, therefore, determined to take up his winter quarters at Chicaza. For this purpose, he commanded wood and straw to be brought from the neighbouring hamlets, in order to construct houses ; for, notwithstanding there were two hundred in the village, they were too small to shelter the army.

The Spaniards remained nearly two months in this encampment without molestation, and enjoying some repose. The cavalry daily scoured the fields, and captured many natives, whom De Soto sent to the Cacique with presents and offers of peace and friendship. The Cacique returned favourable replies, promising, from day to day, to visit the camp, but as often excusing his delay, and sending presents of fruits, fish and venison. The Governor gave the principal warriors of this chieftain a feast, at which some pork was served up. This the Indians had never before tasted, but found it so palatable and delicious, that from this time they

prowled about the encampment every night, to steal and kill the swine. Two of them, who were caught in the act, were shot by order of the Governor, a third had his hands cut off, and was sent to the Cacique as an example to his countrymen.

About this time, four soldiers repaired to the dwelling of the Indian chief, about a league from the camp, without the Governor's permission, and carried off by force some skins and mantles, which so enraged the Indians, that many of them abandoned their homes. When De Soto heard of this violence, he had them all arrested; condemned the two ringleaders, Francisco Osorio and one Fuentez, to death, and confiscated the goods of all the four culprits.

The priests and officers of the army supplicated the General to mitigate the sentence, and begged the life of Francisco Osorio. De Soto, however, was inflexible. The unfortunate criminals were led into the public square to be beheaded. At this moment a party of Indians arrived, having been sent by the Cacique, to make his complaints. This event, which seemed calculated to hasten the death of the criminals, was the means of their salvation. Juan Ortiz, the interpreter, instigated by Baltazar de Galle-

gos, and other officers of rank, gave a false interpretation of the complaints to the inexorable Governor. He told him that the Indian Chief had sent these messengers to say, the soldiers had not offended him, and that he should consider it as a favour if they were pardoned and set at liberty. Upon this, De Soto pardoned the criminals.* On the other hand, Ortiz assured the Indians, that the soldiers who had injured them were in prison, and that the Governor would punish them in such a manner, as should serve for an example to the whole Spanish army.

To the great annoyance of the Spaniards, the subjects of this Cacique kept up constant alarms at night, as if about to assail the Spanish cantonment; but the moment the soldiers sallied out, they took to flight. The Governor suspected, however, that these were but feigned attacks, intended to render his sentinels careless and put them off their guard, when a real attack should be made. He, therefore, exhorted his Camp-Master Luis de Moscoso, to be unceasing in his vigilance, and maintain a strict watch upon the

* Portuguese Narration, c. 20.

camp at night. His suspicions proved in the issue to be correct, though unfortunately they were but little heeded.

1541. A dark and cloudy night, when the wind was blowing furiously from the north, was chosen by the Cacique for a grand assault upon the village occupied by the Spaniards. Dividing his forces into three separate bodies, in order to attack three several points at the same time, he led on the centre in person, and approached in the dead of night, with such silence, as to arrive within a hundred paces of the Spanish sentinels, without being perceived. Having learnt by his scouts, that the two other divisions were equally advanced, he gave the signal of attack.

Immediately the air resounded with blasts of conch shells, the rumbling of wooden drums, mingled with yells and war-whoops of savages, who rushed like demons to the assault. Many had lighted matches, resembling cords made of a vegetable substance, which when whirled in the air, burst into a flame; others had arrows tipped with the same inflammable matter. These they directed against the houses, which being of reeds and straw, instantly took fire,

and, the wind blowing strongly, were soon wrapped in flames.

The Spaniards, although surprised by this sudden and furious assault, rushed out to defend themselves. De Soto, who always slept in his doublet and hose, that he might be prepared against such emergencies, clasped on his casque, drew on a surcoat of quilted cotton an inch and a half thick, the best defence against the enemy's arrows, seized buckler and lance, mounted his horse, and dashed fearlessly into the midst of his foes. Ten or twelve horsemen followed him, though not immediately.

With their wonted spirit, the soldiers started up in every direction to repel the Indians; but they fought under great disadvantages. The strong wind blowing the flames and smoke directly in their faces extremely disconcerted them. Some were obliged to crawl out of their quarters on all fours to escape the fire; some, bewildered, fled from house to house; others rushed out into the plain; whilst some flew to rescue the sick and wounded who were in a dwelling apart. Before succour arrived, however, many of these latter had perished in the fierce conflagration.

The cavalry had not time to arm themselves

or saddle their steeds. Some succeeded in rescuing theirs from the flames; others, who had fastened up their horses with iron chains, because they were restive from high mettle, not having time to release them, were obliged to leave them to their fate and fly for their own lives. A few who were enabled to mount, galloped to the assistance of the Governor, who, with a scanty band of followers had been engaged some time with the Indians. The other two bodies of the enemy entering the village, simultaneously attacked the Spaniards on each flank; and, aided by the fire and smoke made dreadful havock.

Forty or fifty soldiers stationed at the eastern end of the village, where the fire and the battle raged most fiercely, fled into the fields. Nuño Tobar rushed after them sword in hand, having in the hurry left unbuckled his coat of mail. "Turn, soldiers! turn!" he cried, "whither are you flying? Here is neither Cordova nor Seville to give you refuge. Your safety lies in your courage and the vigour of your arms, not in flight." At this moment thirty soldiers, from a part of the village which the flames had not reached, came up to inter-

cept the fugitives. They taunted their recreant comrades with their shameful flight, and inducing them to join forces, they hastened together to renew the combat.

At this time, Andres de Vasconcelos, with twenty-four chosen cavaliers of his company, all Portuguese hidalgos, most of whom had served as horsemen in the wars on the African frontier, charged the enemy's main body. He was accompanied by Nuño Tobar on foot. The fury of their attack forced the savages to retire.

This timely reinforcement gave new courage to the handful of Spaniards, who, headed by the Governor, were fighting in that quarter. De Soto had marked an Indian warrior who had fought with great fury. Closing with him, he gave him a thrust with his lance, but leaning with all his force upon the right stirrup to repeat the blow, the saddle, which had been left ungirt in the confusion of the assault, slipped off, and De Soto fell into the midst of his enemies. The Spaniards, seeing the imminent peril of their General, both horse and foot dashed forward to his rescue, and kept the Indians at bay until he was extricated and his steed saddled. De Soto instantly vaulted upon his back, and plunged again into the fight.

The Indians, at length completely vanquished, fled from the field. De Soto pursued them with his troopers as long as they could be distinguished by the light of the burning village; then ordering the recall to be sounded, returned to ascertain his loss. He found this greater than he had imagined. Forty Spaniards had fallen in the conflict. Among the dead was a Spanish woman, the wife of a worthy soldier, and the only female who had accompanied the army. Her husband had left her behind when he rushed forth to fight. She had escaped from the house, but returned to save some pearls; the flames cut off her second retreat, and she was afterwards found burnt to death.

Fifty horses also had perished and many were wounded. Above twenty had been either burnt or shot with arrows in the houses where their masters were obliged to leave them tied up. The darts had been skilfully aimed at the most vital parts. One horse had two shafts through the heart from opposite directions. Another, one of the broadest and heaviest in the army, had been shot by such a vigorous arm, that the arrow passed through both shoulders, the head protruding beyond.

Another loss which grieved the Spaniards, was that of the swine which they had brought with them to stock their projected settlement. These having been shut up in an enclosure roofed with straw nearly all perished in the flames.

In examining the bodies of those Indians who had perished in the battle, the Spaniards found three cords wound round several of them. These, it is said, they had brought to secure their anticipated spoils; one being intended to bind a Spanish captive, another to lead off a horse, and the third to tie up a hog. The story, however, savours strongly of camp gossip.

This disastrous battle, following the ruinous one of Mauvila, increased the Governor's gloom and exasperation of spirit. Having made strict enquiry into the night attack, and the circumstances which had enabled the enemy to approach undiscovered and surprise them so fatally, he attributed it to gross negligence on the part of Luis de Moscoso in placing sentinels and going the rounds. The tardy arrival of Moscoso on the fatal battle-field of Mauvila, had before excited his indignation, which was now renewed, and in this fresh cause of vexation, forgetting his feelings of friendship,

for an old brother in arms, he deposed Moscoso from his post of Master of the Camp, and appointed in his place Baltazar de Gallegos.*

* Garcilaso de la Vega, L. 3, c. 36, 37. Portuguese Narrative, c. 20.

CHAPTER XI.

The Spaniards remove to Chicacilla—Occurrences there—The exploit of Juan de Guzman—An invention of one of the soldiers to protect the army against cold—Juan de Añasco and a detachment of horse and foot have a contest with the natives; and how he was taunted by them—Storming the fortress of Alibano—Challenge of an Indian warrior and how he fared in consequence.

1541. THREE days after this disastrous battle, the Spaniards shifted their encampment to a more advantageous position called Chicacilla,* about a league distant. Here they set up a forge, and employed themselves in newly tem-

* This is a little Chicaza.

pering their swords which had been injured by the fire, and in making saddles, shields, and lances, to replace those consumed.

In this village they passed the remainder of the winter, suffering grievously from extreme cold. They were in wretched plight, having saved no clothing from the late conflagration except what they chanced to have on their backs. When the savages learnt the extent of the havock they had made, their fierce spirits were aroused anew, and they hovered every night round the camp, making repeated assaults and causing continual alarms. The Spaniards were obliged to be constantly upon their guard, formed into four different squadrons with sentries posted, lest the Indians should fire the houses as they had done those of Chicaça. They maintained a vigilant watch, for the savages burst upon them at all hours. In these nocturnal skirmishes many were killed and wounded on both sides.

Every morning, De Soto despatched four or five parties of horse, in different directions, to scour the country; these cut down every Indian they encountered, and always returned at sunset, with the assurance that there was not one remaining within four leagues. In four or five

hours afterwards, however, hordes of savages were again prepared to attack them. It seemed almost incredible that such hosts should have assembled in so short a time.

One night a band of natives warily approached the place where Captain Juan de Guzman was posted, with his company. De Guzman perceiving them by the light of some blazing faggots, sprang upon his horse, and followed by five troopers and a few foot, charged them vigorously. De Guzman, who was a cavalier of unflinching spirit, though of a delicate form, singled out an Indian in the van-guard, who carried a banner, and made a lunge at him with his lance. The Indian avoiding the blow, caught the lance with his right hand, wrested it from De Guzman, then seized him by the collar and giving him a violent jerk, hurled him from the saddle to his feet—all this while holding the banner in his left hand.

The soldiers witnessing the imminent danger of their leader, rushed forward, slew the Indian, and routed the whole band of savages. The troopers dashed after them in hot pursuit, and the ground favouring the movements of their horses, the Spaniards would have signally avenged their late disaster had not

their career been suddenly arrested by the cry of "to the camp! to the camp!" At this startling summons, wheeling about, they galloped back to the encampment, and thus the fugitives escaped. The alarm had been raised by a monk, who was fearful that the troopers, in their eagerness of pursuit, might fall into some ambush of the enemy. Forty Indians fell in this affray. The Spaniards lost two of their horses, and two were wounded.

The army remained in this encampment until the end of March. Besides being unceasingly harassed by their enemies, they suffered bitterly from cold, which was rigorous in the extreme; especially to men who had to pass every night under arms, with scarcely any clothing.

In this extremity, however, they were relieved by the ingenuity of one of the common soldiers. He succeeded in making a matting, four fingers thick, of long soft grass, or dried ivy, one half of which served as a mattress, and the other half was turned over as a blanket.

These rustic beds were brought every night to the main guard, and with their aid the soldiers on duty were enabled to endure the severe cold of the winter nights. The army also found

abundant provisions of maize and dried fruits in the neighbourhood.*

On the first of April, the army broke up their encampment. They travelled four leagués the first day, through an open country, thickly studded with small hamlets, and halted in a plain beyond the territory of Chicaza; vainly fancying that, having quitted their province, the Indians would no longer molest them.

A strong party of horse and foot, commanded by Juan de Añasco, which was foraging for provisions, came in sight of an Indian fortress, garrisoned by a large body of savages, who looked like devils rather than men. Their bodies were painted in stripes, white, black, and red, appearing as if clothed with fantastic garments. Their faces were blackened, and they had red circles round their eyes, which gave them a ferocious aspect. Some wore feathers upon their heads, and others horns. On seeing the Spaniards, they sallied forth, shouting, yelling, and beating wooden drums.

De Añasco, retreating to an open field within a cross-bow shot of the fortress, drew up

* Garcilaso de la Vega, Lib. 3. c. 39. Portuguese Narrative, c. 21.

his cross-bow men with their bucklers before the horses to protect them. In this way he received the light skirmishing assaults of the Indians. The latter, seeing the numerical inferiority of the Spaniards, taunted them from a distance, by a singular piece of mummery. Having kindled a great fire in front of their fort, they pretended to knock one of their companions on the head with a club, and then swung him by the feet and shoulders, as if they would throw him into the flames: thereby giving the Spaniards to understand the treatment they were to expect. Juan de Añasco was of too irritable a temperament to bear such taunts patiently, but being sensible that his force was insufficient to attack the fortress, he despatched three troopers to the Governor, to entreat a reinforcement.

Leaving one-third of the infantry and cavalry to guard the camp, De Soto immediately marched out with the remainder, to assault the fort, which was called Alibamo.* It was built in the form of a quadrangle, fenced with strong palisades. The sides were each four hundred paces in length. Within, the area was

* We give the name according to the Inca. The Portuguese Narrator calls it Alimamu.

traversed from side to side by two other palisades, dividing it into separate parts. In the outer wall were three portals, so low and narrow that a man could not enter on horseback. Beyond these, there was a second wall, with three entrances, and behind this a third; so that if the outer wall were gained, the garrison could retreat to the second, and so on. In the last wall were likewise three portals, opening upon a narrow and deep river, that flowed in the rear of the fort.* So high were the banks of this stream that it was exceedingly difficult to clamber up on foot; they were consequently inaccessible to horses. A few rude, dilapidated bridges were thrown across the river, affording a difficult passage.

The Indians had constructed their fortress in this manner, that the Spaniards might not avail themselves of their horses, but be obliged to contend with them on foot; in which mode of encounter they fancied they were not only equal, but superior to their enemies.

De Soto, having carefully reconnoitred the fortress, ordered a hundred of the best armed horsemen to dismount, and forming three

* Supposed to be the Yazoo river.

squadrons, advanced three abreast, and commenced the attack; whilst the foot, who were less completely cased in defensive armour, supported their rear. The squadrons were ordered to attack the three entrances simultaneously. Juan de Guzman led on one of the squadrons, Alonso Romo de Cardenosa another, and Gonzalo Silvestre the third.

The Indians, who had until this moment remained shut up in their fortress, perceiving the preparations which the Spaniards were making for the assault, sallied out to battle, a hundred men from each portal. At the first discharge of their arrows, Diego de Castro, Luis Bravo, and Francisco de Figueroa, were brought to the ground mortally wounded. All three were pierced in the thigh with shafts barbed with flint; for the savages having gained some experience during their warfare with the Spaniards, always aimed at the thigh, which was never guarded. The Spaniards, seeing their companions fall, shouted to one another to rush in, and leave the Indians no time to gall them with their arrows; then charging furiously, they drove the enemy before them, to the very portals of the fortress.

While Juan de Añasco and Andres de Vasconcelos attacked the savages on one flank, De Soto with twenty horse, charged upon the other. As the Governor was spurring onward, an arrow struck him upon his casque with such force, that it rebounded a pike's length, in the air, and De Soto confessed afterwards that it made his eyes flash fire. Pressed by the united shock of horse and foot, the Indians tried to reach the entrances of their fort, but these were so narrow, that a great number were slaughtered without the walls. The Spaniards rushed in with them pell mell.

The carnage within the fortress was dreadful. The savages were crowded together, and the Spaniards, remembering the injuries they had received from them during the past winter, gave vent to their rage, and massacred them without mercy. As they wore no defensive armour, they were easily dispatched. Many trusting to their agility, leaped from the wall into the plains, and falling into the hands of their enemies, were instantly slain. Many escaped to the bridges by the portals in the rear; but in their haste to cross, several were jostled into the river which flowed beneath. Others, pressed

by their foes, threw themselves from the banks and swam across. In a short time, the fortress was abandoned and in the power of the Spaniards; but those Indians who reached the opposite bank formed themselves in battle array.

One of the savages who had escaped, desirous of showing his skill with the bow and arrow, separated himself from his companions, and shouted to the Spaniards, giving them to understand by signs and words, that he challenged any archer to come out and have a shot with him, in order to prove which was the better marksman. Upon this, Juan de Salinas, an Austrian hidalgo, who, with some companions, had sheltered himself among trees from the arrows, stepped forth, and walking down to the river bank, took his stand opposite to the Indian. One of his companions called to him to wait until he should come to guard him with his shield; but Salinas refused to take any advantage of his enemy. He placed an arrow in his cross-bow, while the Indian also selected one from his quiver, and both drew at the same moment.

The dart of Juan de Salinis took effect, and

entered the Indian's breast. He would have fallen, but was received in the arms of his companions, who bore him away, more dead than alive. The Indian's arrow pierced the Spaniard in the nape of the neck, and remained crossed in the wound. Salinas returned with it in this state to his comrades, well pleased with his success; the comrades of the fallen Indian allowing him to depart without molestation, as the challenge had been man to man.

The Adelantado, determined to punish the impudence and daring of these Indians, called on the cavalry to follow him; and crossing the river by an easy ford above the fort, galloped out upon the plain; then, charging the savages, he pursued them for more than a league, with great slaughter; and had not night interposed, not one would have survived to tell the disastrous tale. As it was, the carnage was very great.

When the Spaniards gave up the pursuit, they returned to their encampment and halted four days, in order to afford relief to the wounded. Fifteen subsequently died. Among these were the three cavaliers who had fallen at the commencement of the

battle. They were greatly lamented by their companions, for they were noble, young and valiant;—not one of them had reached his twenty-fifth year.*

* Garcilaso de la Vega. Lib. 3. c. 35. Portuguese Narrative, c. 20.

CHAPTER XXII.

The Spaniards come in sight of the Mississippi—The Cacique Chisca—His hostile movements.

1541. AFTER four days the Spaniards departed from their encampment at Alibamo, still marching towards the north, to avoid the sea. For seven days they traversed an uninhabited country full of forests and swamps, where they had sometimes to swim their horses.* At length they came in sight of a village, called Chisca, situated near a wide river. As this was the largest they had discovered in Florida, they called it Rio Grande; it was the same now called the Mississippi.† The Indians of this

* Portuguese Relation. c. 22.

† The Inca, on the authority of Juan Coles, one of the followers of De Soto, says that the Indian name of

province, knew nothing of the strangers' approach, owing to their unceasing warfare with the natives of Chicaza, and the country lying between them being unpeopled. The moment the Spaniards descried the village they entered it, in a disorderly manner, took many Indians prisoners of either sex, and of all ages, and pillaged the houses.

The dwelling of the Cacique, which served as a fortress stood on a high artificial mound, on one side of the village. The only ascent to it was by two ladders. Many of the Indians took refuge there, whilst others fled to a wood, between the village and the river. Chisca, the chieftain of the province, was very old, and lying ill in his bed. Hearing the tumult and shouts, however, he quitted his couch and sallied forth. Beholding the attack upon his village and the capture of his vassals, he seized a tomahawk and began to descend in a furious rage,

this river was Chucagua. The Portuguese Narrator says, that in one place it was called Tumuliseu, in another, Tapatá, in another, Mico; and at that part where it enters the sea, Ri. It is probable it had different names among the different Indian tribes. The village of Chisca is called Quizquiz, by the Portuguese historian.

threatening extermination to all who had dared to enter his domains without permission. With all these bravadoes, the Cacique, beside being infirm and exceedingly old, was of very diminutive stature ;—the most miserable little Indian the Spaniards had seen in all their marchings. He was animated, however, by the remembrance of the deeds and exploits of his youth, for he had been a doughty warrior, and ruled over a vast province.

The women and attendants of the Cacique surrounded him, and with tears and entreaties, prevailed upon him to retire ; at the same time, those who came from the village informed him that the enemy were men, such as they had never before seen or heard of, and that they came upon strange animals of great size and wonderful agility. “ If you desire to fight with them,” said they, “ to avenge this injury, it will be better to summon together the warriors of the neighbourhood, and await a more fitting opportunity. In the meantime, let us put on the semblance of friendship, and not by any inconsiderate rashness, provoke our destruction.” With these and similar arguments, the women and attendants of the Cacique, prevented his sallying forth to battle. He continued, how-

ever in great wrath, and when the Governor sent him a message, offering peace, he returned an answer, refusing all intercourse, and breathing nothing but vengeance.

De Soto and his followers, wearied out with the harrassing warfare of the past winter, were very desirous of peace. Having pillaged the village and offended the Cacique, they were in a dilemma; accordingly, they sent him many gentle and soothing messages. Added to their disinclination for war, they observed, that during the three hours they had halted in the village, nearly four thousand well-armed warriors had rallied round their Chief and they feared, that if such a multitude could assemble in so short a time, there must be large reinforcements in reserve. They perceived, moreover, that the situation of the village was as advantageous to the Indians, as unfavourable to them; for the plains around being covered with trees and intersected by numerous streams, would impede the movements of their cavalry. But more than all this, they had learned from sad experience, that these incessant conflicts did not in the least profit them. Day after day, men and horses were slain; in the midst of a hostile country, and far from home

or hope of succour, their number was gradually diminishing.

The Indians held a council to discuss the messages of the strangers. Many were for war : they were enraged at the imprisonment of their wives and children, and the pillage of their property ; to recover which, according to their fierce notions, the only resource was arms. Others, who had not lost anything, were nevertheless hostile to an accommodation, from a natural inclination for fighting. They wished to exhibit their prowess, and to try what kind of men those were, who carried such strange arms. The more pacific savages, however, advised that the offered peace should be accepted, as the surest means of recovering their wives, children and effects. They added, that the enemy might burn their villages, and lay waste their fields, at a time when their grain was almost ripening, and thus add greatly to their calamities. The valour of these strangers, said they, is sufficiently evident ; for men who have passed through so many enemies, cannot be otherwise than brave.

This latter counsel prevailed. The Cacique, dissembling his anger, replied to the envoy, that since the Spaniards desired peace, he

would grant it, and allow them to halt in the village, and give them food, on condition that they would immediately set his subjects free and restore their effects. He also stipulated that they should not enter into his presence. If these terms were accepted, he said, he would be friendly ; if not he defied them to the combat.

The Spaniards readily agreed to these conditions. The prisoners and plunder were restored, and the Indians departed from the village, leaving food in their dwellings for the Spaniards, who remained here six days to tend the sick. On the last day, with the permission of the Cacique, De Soto visited him, and thanked him for his friendship and hospitality, and on the following morning the army resumed their march.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Spaniards prepare to cross the Mississippi—A Cacique comes to visit the Governor with a large fleet of canoes—The result of their interview—Passage of the Mississippi—Arrival among the Kaskaskias Indians.

1541. DEPARTING from Chisca, the army travelled by slow journeys of three leagues a day, on account of the sick and wounded. They followed the windings of the river until the fourth day, when they came to an opening in the thickets. Hitherto, they had been threading a vast forest, bordering the stream, the banks of which were so high on both sides, that they could neither descend nor mount them. De Soto found it necessary to halt in this plain twenty days, for the purpose of building boats or piraguas to cross the river; for

on the opposite bank, a great number of Indian warriors were assembled to defend the passage, well armed, and with a fleet of canoes.

The morning after the Governor had encamped, some of the natives visited him. Advancing, without speaking a word, and turning their faces to the east, they made a profound genuflection to the sun; then facing to the west, they made another to the moon, and concluded with a similar, but less humble reverence to De Soto. They said they came in the name of their Cacique and in that of all his subjects, to bid the Spaniards welcome, and to offer their friendship and services; adding that they were desirous of seeing what kind of men the strangers were, as there was a tradition handed down from their ancestors, that a white people would come and conquer their country.* The Adelantado said many kind things in reply, and dismissed them, well pleased with their courteous reception. The Cacique sent him repeated messages of kindness, but never visited the encampment; excusing himself on account of ill-health. His subjects aided the Spaniards with much cheerfulness; while the Indians from the oppo-

* Portuguese Narrative. c. 22.

site side of the river, harassed them continually: crossing over in their canoes, and discharging arrows at them, while they were at work. The archers and cross-bow men, however, as on a former occasion, concealed themselves in pits, until the enemy drew nigh; then suddenly rising, dispersed them with great slaughter.

One day, the Spaniards, perceived a fleet of two hundred canoes descending the river. These canoes were filled with armed Indians, painted after their wild fashion, adorned with feathers of every colour, and carrying shields in their hands, made of the buffalo hide, with which some sheltered the rowers, while others stood on the prow and poop of the canoes with their bows and arrows. The canoes of the Cacique and chief warriors were decorated with fanciful awnings, under which they sat and gave their orders to those who rowed. "It was a pleasing sight," says the Portuguese Narrator, "to behold these wild savages in their canoes, which were neatly made and of great size, and with their awnings, coloured feathers, and waving standards, appeared like a fleet of galleys."

They paddled to within a stone's throw of the shore where the Governor was standing, surrounded by his officers. The Chief address-

ing him, professed that he came to offer his services, and to assure him of obedience, as he had been informed that the Spanish leader was the most powerful prince of the whole earth. De Soto returned him thanks, and begged him to land, that they might converse more conveniently. The Cacique made no answer, but sent three canoes on shore with presents of fruit, and bread made of the pulp of a certain kind of plum.* The Governor again importuned the savage to land, but seeing him hesitate, and suspecting treachery, he marshalled his men in order of battle. Upon this, the Indians turned their prows and fled. The cross-bow men sent a flight of arrows after them, and killed five or six of their number. They retreated in good order, covering the rowers with their shields. Several times after this, they landed to attack the soldiers, as was supposed, but the moment the Spaniards charged them, they fled to their canoes.

At the end of twenty days four piraguas were built and launched. About three hours before dawn De Soto ordered them to be manned and four troopers of tried courage to go in each.

* The persimmon. Loaves are still made of this wild fruit among the Indians and settlers of the West.

The rowers pulled strongly; when within fifty yards of the shore, the troopers dashed into the water, and meeting with no opposition from the enemy, easily effected a landing and made themselves masters of the pass. Two hours before the sun went down, the whole army had crossed the Mississippi.

The river in this place, says the Portuguese historian, was half a league from one shore to the other, so that a man standing still could scarcely be discerned from the opposite bank. It was of great depth, of wonderful rapidity, and very muddy; besides being always filled with floating trees and timber carried down by the force of the current.*

Breaking up the boats as before to preserve the nails, the Spaniards proceeded onward four days through a wilderness intersected in many places by morasses which they were obliged to ford. On the fifth day, from the summit of a high ridge, they descried a large village con-

* Portuguese Narrative, c. 22. This place where De Soto and his army crossed the Mississippi was probably the lowest Chickasaw Bluff, one of the ancient crossing places between the thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth parallel of latitude.

taining about four hundred dwellings. It was situated on the banks of a river, the borders of which, as far as the eye could reach, were covered with luxuriant fields of maize interspersed with groves of fruit trees.* The natives, who had already received notice of the strangers' approach, thronged out in crowds to receive them, freely offering their houses and effects for their use.

In a short time two Indian chiefs arrived with a train of warriors bearing a welcome from their Cacique and an offer of his services. The Governor received them very courteously, and treated them with such kindness that they went away well pleased.

The Spaniards finding abundance of food for man and horse remained six days in the village which bore the name of Casquin or Casqui, as did the whole province and its Cacique†.

Resuming their journey, they marched through a populous and free country where the

* Probably the river St. Francis.

† Supposed to be the same as the Kaskaskias Indians, who at that time peopled a province south-west of the Missouri. Vide Nuttall's Arkansas, p. 82, 250, 251. Charlevoix, Journal Historique, v. 3, let. 28.

land was more elevated and the soil less alluvial than any they had yet seen on the borders of the Mississippi. The fields were exuberantly fruitful; the pecan nut, the red and gray plum, and mulberry trees grew there in abundance.* In two days they came to the chief town where the Cacique resided. It stood on the same side of the river about seven leagues above, in a very fertile and populous neighbourhood. Here the Spaniards were well received by the Cacique, who made De Soto a present of mantles†, skins, and fish, and invited him to lodge in his habitation, which was on a high artificial hill on one side of the village, and consisted of twelve or thirteen large houses for the accommodation of his numerous family of women and attendants. The Governor declined the invitation, for fear of incommoding him. A part of the army was quartered in houses, the remainder lodged

* Portuguese Narrative, c. 23. Supposed to be the country of the Little Prairie and that chain of high land extending to New Madrid; in the vicinity of which are to be seen many aboriginal remains. Vide Nuttall's Arkansas, p. 251.

† These mantles were fabricated from coarse threads of the bark of trees and nettles.

in bowers, which the Indians quickly built of green branches, in groves close by. It was now the month of May, and as the weather was becoming oppressively warm, the tenants of these rustic bowers found them truly delightful.

CHAPTER XIV.

A religious ceremony on the banks of the Mississippi— Expedition against the Cacique Capaha—His village is sacked—Fortifies himself in an island where he is again assailed—The Spaniards deserted by their allies, the Casquins.

1541. THE army remained tranquil in the village during three days, with much good feeling on both sides. On the morning of the fourth, the Cacique, accompanied by all his principal subjects, came into the presence of De Soto and making a profound obeisance, "Señor," said he, "as you are superior to us in prowess, and surpass us in arms, we likewise believe that your God is better than our God! These you behold before you are the chief warriors of my dominions. We supplicate you to pray to your

God to send us rain, for our fields are parched for want of water!"*

De Soto replied, that although he and all his followers were but sinners, yet they would supplicate God, the father of mercies, to show mercy unto their heathen brethren. Then, in the presence of the Cacique, he ordered his chief carpenter, Francisco, the Geonese, to hew down the highest and largest pine tree in the vicinity and construct a cross.

Accordingly, a tree was immediately felled of such immense size, that a hundred men could not raise it from the ground. Having formed a perfect cross, the Spaniards erected it on a high hill on the banks of the river which served the Indians as a watch tower, overlooking every eminence in the vicinity. Every thing being prepared in two days, the Governor ordered that the next morning all should march to it in solemn procession, except an armed squadron of horse and foot who were commanded to be on the alert to protect the army.

The Cacique walked beside the Governor, and many of the savage warriors mingled with

* The Portuguese Narrator says, that the Cacique besought him to restore to sight two blind men he had brought with him.

the Spaniards. Before them went a choir of priests and friars chanting the litany, to which the soldiers responded. The procession, in which were more than a thousand persons, both Spaniards and Indians, wound slowly and solemnly along until it arrived before the cross, where all fell upon their knees. Two or three prayers were now offered up: the multitude then rose, and two by two approached the holy emblem, bent the knee before it, worshipped and kissed it.

On the opposite shore of the river were collected fifteen or twenty thousand savages of either sex and of all ages, to witness the singular but imposing ceremony. With their arms extended and their hands raised, they watched the movements of the Spaniards. Ever and anon they elevated their eyes to heaven, and made signs with their faces and hands as if asking God to listen to the Christians' prayer. They then raised a low wailing cry like people in excessive grief, which was echoed by the plaintive murmurings of their children's voices. De Soto and his followers were moved to tenderness to behold in a strange land, a savage people worshipping with such deep humility and tears, the emblem of our redemption. The

procession returned observing the same order; the priests chaunted *Te Deum laudamus*, and with this closed the solemnities of the day.

God, in his mercy, says the Spanish chronicler, willing to show these heathens that he listeneth unto those who call upon him in truth, in the middle of the ensuing night, sent down a plenteous rain upon the earth, to the great joy of the Indians.*

The Cacique with his warriors, astonished and overjoyed at this unhoped for blessing, formed a procession in imitation of the Christians, and repaired to De Soto to express gratitude for the kindness his God had shewn them through his intercession. The Governor answered them, that they must give thanks to God, who created the heavens and earth, and was the bestower of these and other far greater mercies.

It is an interesting reflection, that nearly three centuries ago, the cross, the type of our divine religion, was planted on the banks of the Mississippi, whose silent forests were awakened by the Christian's hymn of gratitude and praise. The effect was vivid but transitory.

* Las Casas, L. 4, c. 6.

The "voice cried in the wilderness," reached and was answered by every heart, but died away and was forgotten, and was not to be heard again in that savage region for many generations. It was as if a lightning gleam had broken for a moment upon a benighted world, startling it with sudden effulgence, only to leave it in tenfold gloom. The real dawning was yet afar off from the valley of the Mississippi.

As the army had been already quartered nine or ten days in this village, De Soto gave orders for them to prepare to march the following morning. The Cacique, who was about fifty years of age, obtained permission of the Governor to accompany him with a train of warriors and domestics; the one to escort his troops the other to carry his supplies, as they would have to traverse a wilderness; also to clear the road, gather wood for their encampment, and fodder for their horses. The Cacique's true object, however, was to avail himself of the presence of the Spaniards to wreak vengeance on a neighbouring chieftain called Capaha.* A

* In the Portuguese Narrative, the name of this Cacique is spelt Pacaha.

war had existed between their respective tribes for several generations ; but the present Cacique of Capaha had gained the ascendancy, and kept Casquin in continual subjection, by the superiority of his forces.

In the morning, Casquin assembled his followers to escort the Governor. He had three thousand Indians laden with supplies, and with the baggage of the Spanish army;—they were all armed with bows and arrows. But besides these, he was accompanied by five thousand of his choicest warriors, well armed, grotesquely painted, and decorated with war-plumes. With these he secretly meditated a signal revenge on his enemy, Capaha.

With the Governor's permission, he took the lead under pretence of clearing the road of any lurking foe, and of preparing every thing for the Spanish encampment. He divided his men into squadrons, and marched in good military order, a quarter of a league in advance. By night he posted sentinels in the same manner as the Spaniards.

In this way they travelled for three days, when they came to a great swamp, miry on the borders, with a lake in the centre, too deep to

be forded, and forming a kind of gulf on the Mississippi, into which it emptied itself.* Across this piece of water Casquin's Indians constructed a rude bridge of trunks of trees laid upon posts driven into the bottom of the lake, with a row of stakes above the bridge, for those who crossed to hold by. The horses were obliged to swim, and were got over with great difficulty on account of the mire. This swamp separated the two hostile provinces of Casquin and Capaha. The Spaniards were nearly the whole day crossing it and encamped in beautiful meadows about half a league beyond.

After travelling two more days, early on the third day they arrived at some elevated ridges, whence they descried the principal town of Capaha, the frontier post and defence of the province.†

It contained five hundred large houses, situated on a high ground which commanded the surrounding country, being nearly encircled by a deep moat fifty paces broad, and where the moat did not extend, was de-

* Inca, Lib. 4, c. 7. Portuguese Relation, c. 23.

† This was the most northern point reached by De Soto on the Mississippi.

fended by a strong wall of timber and plaster, such as has already been described. The moat was filled with water by means of a canal, cut from the Mississippi, three leagues distant. The canal was deep and sufficiently wide for two canoes to pass abreast, without touching each others' paddles. Being filled with fish, it supplied all the wants of the village and army.

Capaha had received intelligence by his scouts of the formidable allies who accompanied his old antagonist, Casquin. His own warriors were dispersed, and not sufficient in number to resist such additional force. As soon, therefore, as he saw the enemy approaching, he sprang into a canoe on the moat, and passing along the canal into the Grand River, took refuge in a strong island. Such of his people as had canoes followed him, others fled into the neighbouring woods, while some lingered in the village.

Casquin marching, as usual, in advance, arrived with his warriors at the village some time before the Spaniards. Meeting with no resistance, he entered it warily, suspecting an ambuscade. This gave time for many loiterers to escape.

As soon as Casquin ascertained that the village was at his mercy, he gave full vent to his vengeance. His warriors scoured the place, killed and scalped all the men they met to the number of a hundred and fifty; plundered the houses, making captives many boys, women and children. Among the captives were two of the numerous wives of Capaha; they were young and beautiful, and had been prevented from embarking with the Cacique, in consequence of the confusion occasioned by the enemy's approach.

The hostility of Casquin and his warriors was not confined to the living, but extended, likewise, to the dead. They broke into the grand mausoleum, in the public square, which the Indians hold so sacred. Here were deposited the remains of numerous ancestors both of the Cacique and great men of his tribe, and here were treasured the trophies gained from Casquin's people in many a past battle. These trophies they tore from the walls and stripped the sepulchre of all its ornaments and treasures. They then threw down the wooden coffins in which were deposited the remains of the dead, trampled upon the bodies, scattered about the bones, and wreaked upon them all kinds of in-

dignities, in revenge for past injuries, which the deceased had inflicted upon their tribe. At the entrance of the sepulchre, stuck on the ends of pikes, were heads of many of their warriors, slain in former battles. These they bore away with them, replacing them with those of their enemies whom they had just massacred. They would have completed their triumph by setting fire to the mausoleum and to the whole village, but were restrained by a fear of offending the Governor. All these outrages were perpetrated before the Spaniards had reached the place.

De Soto was much concerned at the cruel ravage committed by his allies. He immediately sent envoys to Capaha, to the island on which he had fortified himself, with offers of friendship. These were indignantly rejected; and the Governor learnt that Capaha, breathing vengeance, had summoned all his warriors.

Finding every effort to conciliate the Chieftain fruitless, De Soto determined to attack him in his strong hold. Casquin provided above seventy canoes for the purpose; and an invasion of the island was made by two hundred Spaniards and three thousand Indians.

The island was covered with a thick forest of trees and underwood, and the Cacique had fortified himself strongly with barricades. The Spaniards effected a landing with great difficulty; gained the first barrier by hard fighting, and pressed on to the second within which the women and children were sheltered. Here the warriors of Capaha fought with redoubled fury, and struck such dismay into the people of Casquin that they abandoned their Spanish allies and fled to their canoes; nay, they would have carried off the canoes of the Spaniards also, had there not been a couple of soldiers in each to guard them.

The Spaniards, thus deserted by their pusillanimous allies, and being overpowered by numbers, began to retreat in good order to their canoes. They would all, however, have been cut off had not Capaha restrained the fury of his warriors and suffered the enemy to regain the shore and embark unmolested.

This unexpected forbearance on the part of the savage chieftain, surprised the Adelantado. On the following day four principal warriors arrived on an embassy from Capaha. They came with great ceremony; bowed to the sun,

the moon, and the Governor; but took no notice of Casquin who was present, treating him with utter contempt and disdain. In the name of their Cacique they prayed oblivion of the past and amity for the future, declaring that their Chieftain was ready to come in person and do homage. The General received them with the utmost affability, assured them of his friendship, and sent them away well pleased with their reception.

Casquin was vexed at this negotiation, and would fain have prolonged hostilities between the Spaniards and his ancient enemies; but the Governor was as much charmed with the frankness and magnanimity of one Cacique as he had been displeased with the craft and cruelty of the other. He issued orders forbidding any one to injure the natives of the province or their possessions.

In order to appease the Governor for the dastardly flight of his warriors, Casquin made him presents of fish together with mantles and skins of various kinds; and moreover, brought him one of his daughters as a handmaid. De Soto, however, was not thoroughly to be reconciled. He permitted the Cacique to remain

with him, and to retain a sufficient number of vassals for his personal services, but obliged him to send home all his warriors.*

* Garcilaso de la Vega, Lib. 4. c. 7, 8, 9. Portuguese Narrative, c. 24.

CHAPTER XXV.

Interview between the Cacique Capaha and De Soto—His two beautiful wives, and their fate—Two soldiers despatched in search of salt and gold, and the account they brought back—The Spaniards arrive at Quiguate—Juan Gaytan refuses to perform his duty, and what De Soto did in consequence.

1541. ON the following morning, Capaha came to De Soto at the village attended by a train of a hundred warriors decorated with beautiful plumes, and with mantles of skins. He was about twenty-six years old, of a handsome person and noble demeanour. When he entered the village his first care was to visit the sepulchre of his ancestors. The indignities that had been offered to their remains were such as an

Indian feels most acutely. The Cacique, however, concealed the grief and rage that burnt within his bosom. Gathering the scattered bones in silence, he kissed them, returned them reverently to their coffins; and having arranged the sepulchre, as well as circumstances would permit, proceeded to the Governor's quarters.

De Soto came forth to receive him, accompanied by Casquin. The Cacique paid homage to the Governor, acknowledging himself his vassal, but took no notice whatever of his old adversary, Casquin. De Soto embraced Capaha as a friend, and he was honourably treated by all the officers. The Cacique answered numerous questions concerning his territories with great clearness and intelligence. When the Governor had ceased his interrogations, and there was a pause, Capaha could no longer restrain his smothered indignation. Turning suddenly to his rival: "Doubtless, Casquin," said he, "you exult in having revenged your past defeats; a thing you could never have effected with your own forces only. You may thank these strangers for it. They will go, but we shall remain in our own country

as we were before. Pray to the sun and moon to send us good weather, then!"

The Governor interposed, and endeavoured to produce a reconciliation between the Chieftains. In deference to him, Capaha repressed his wrath and embraced his adversary; but there passed between them occasional glances that portended a future storm, and the proud Capaha was constantly on the alert on all points of ceremony and precedence, making Casquin give way to his superior pretensions.

The Governor and the rival Caciques partook of a repast together, after which the two young and beautiful wives of Capaha who had been captured, were brought to be restored to him. He received them with many acknowledgments for the generosity thus shown towards him, and then offered them as presents to the Governor. On De Soto's declining to accept them, Capaha begged that he would give them to some of his officers or soldiers, or to whom he pleased, as they could not be admitted again into the household of their prince, nor remain in his territories. The Governor, perceiving that they were considered dishonoured, was persuaded to receive them under his protection, knowing the laws and

customs of these savages to be cruel in the extreme when the chastity of their wives was concerned.*

In the town of Capaha, the Spaniards found a great variety of skins of deer, panthers, bears, and wild cats. These they converted into garments, of which they stood in great need, many being nearly naked. They made moccasons of deer-skins, and used the bear-skins as cloaks. They found Indian bucklers formed of buffalo hides, which the troops took possession of.

While quartered in the village, they were abundantly supplied with fish, taken from the adjacent moat, that formed a kind of pier, into which incredible quantities entered from the Mississippi. Among these was a kind called bagres, the head of which was one-third of its bulk, and about its fins and along its sides, it had bones as sharp as needles. Some of those

* The Portuguese historian says that these beautiful females were the *sisters* of the Cacique Capaha, and that he begged De Soto to accept them and marry them as pledges of his affection. The one, he added, was called Macanoche, and the other Mochifa. They were both handsome and well shaped; especially the former, whose features were beautiful, her countenance expressive, and her air majestic. We have followed the account of the Inca, Garcilaso de la Vega.

caught in the Mississippi weighed from a hundred to a hundred and fifty pounds weight.* There was another fish, also, of a curious shape, having a snout a cubit in length, and the upper lip like a spade or peel.† Neither of these two species had scales. The Indians likewise occasionally brought a fish, as large as a hog, which had several rows of teeth in each jaw.

While in the territory of Capaha, the Governor gathered intelligence from the Indians, that about forty leagues further on, among certain ranges of hills, there was much salt, and also much of a yellowish metal. As the army was suffering from want of salt, and still retained their eagerness for gold, De Soto despatched two trusty and intelligent men, accompanied by Indian guides to visit this region. At the end of eleven days they returned, quite spent and half famished, having eaten nothing

* The cat-fish.

† This spade or palat-fish is at present so rare as scarcely to be met with; but seems to have been peculiar to this region. — Vide Flint's Geography of the Mississippi, v. 1. p. 128 and 129. Nuttal's Arkansas, p. 254.

but green plums and green maize, which they found in some deserted wigwams; six of their native companions were laden with rock-salt in natural crystals, and one with copper. The country through which they had passed was sterile and thinly peopled, and the Indians informed the Governor, that still further north, the country was almost uninhabited, on account of extreme cold. The buffalo roamed there in such numbers that the inhabitants could not cultivate their fields; they subsisted, therefore, by the chase, and principally on the flesh of these wild animals.*

Hearing so unfavourable an account of the country, and that there was no gold in that direction, De Soto returned with his army to the village of Casquin, intending to march westward; for hitherto, ever since leaving Mauvila, he had kept northward, to avoid the sea.† After remaining five days in the village of Casquin, he proceeded along the bank of the river, through a fertile and populous country, until he came to the province of Guiguate, where he was well received. Keeping down

* Portuguese Relation, c. 24.

† Garcilaso de la Vega, L. 4. c. 11.

the river, he arrived on the fourth of August, at the chief village of the province, called by the same name. Here he took up his quarters, in the Cacique's house, where he remained six days.

One night during his halt here, the Governor was informed, that Juan Gaytan, the treasurer, whose turn it was to patrol at four in the morning, refused to perform his duty, urging as a plea the dignity of his official station. De Soto was angry at such a symptom of insubordination, the more so as this cavalier was one of those who had murmured at Mauvila, and had said he would return to Spain or Mexico, as soon as they reached the ships.

Quitting his bed, and proceeding to the terrace before the house of the Cacique, which overlooked the village, De Soto raised his voice until it resounded through the place. "What is this soldiers and captains!" he cried. "Do the mutineers still live, who, when in Mauvila talked of returning to Spain or Mexico? and do they now, with the excuse of being officers of the royal revenue, refuse to patrol the four hours that fall to their share? Why do you desire to return to Spain?—have you left any hereditary estates that you wish to enjoy? Why do you

desire to go to Mexico ?—to prove the baseness and pusillanimity of your spirits ?—that, having it in your power to become chieftains in a vast and noble country you have discovered, you prefer living dependants in a stranger's house, and of being guests at a stranger's table, than to maintain house and table of your own ! What honor will this confer upon you ? Shame, shame ! blush for yourselves, and recollect that, whether officers of the royal treasury or not, you must all serve your sovereign ! Presume not upon any rank you possess ; for, be he who he may, I will strike off the head of that man who refuses to do his duty. And, at once to undeceive you, know that whilst I live, no one shall quit this country until we have conquered and settled it."

These words, uttered with great vehemence, shewed the cause of that moody melancholy which the Governor had manifested since he left Mauvila. This outbreak had a visible effect upon the soldiery. They saw that their general was not to be trifled with, and thenceforward obeyed his orders without murmuring.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The Spaniards arrive at Coligoa—Pass through the province of Palisema, into the country of the Tunicas—The manner in which the natives made salt—Enter the province of Tula—Attack upon an Indian village—Struggle between a soldier and five women—What the Spaniards found in the village of Tula—The tribe of Tula differed from any Indians they had seen—The latter fall suddenly upon the encampment at night—The prowess of an Indian and his fate.

1541. FROM Quiguate, De Soto shaped his course to the north-west, in search of a province called Coligoa, lying at the foot of mountains. He was guided by a single Indian, who led the army for several days through dreary forests and numerous marshes, until they came to the village of Coligoa, on the margin of a small river. The natives, not being apprised of the Spaniards' coming,

upon their approach, threw themselves into the river and fled. The troopers pursued them, and took a number of prisoners. In a few days the Cacique waited upon De Soto, bringing a present of mantles, deer-skins, and hides of the bison and buffalo, and informed him that about six leagues to the northward there was a thinly peopled country, where vast herds of these wild buffalos ranged ; * but that to the southward there was a populous and plentiful province, called Cayas.

The Cacique of Coligoa having furnished the Spaniards with a guide, they resumed their march towards the south, and after a journey of five days, entered the province of Palisema. Its Cacique fled, but left his dwelling furnished and arranged in order for De Soto. The walls were hung with deer-skins, so admirably dyed and dressed, that they appeared to the eye like beautiful tapestry. The floor was likewise covered with skins similarly prepared.†

The adventurers made but a short halt in this province, as the supply of maize was

* This province is supposed to have been situated towards the sources of the St. Francis, or the hills of White River.—Vide Nuttall's Arkansas, p. 256.

† Portuguese Relation, c. 25.

scanty, and pushing rapidly onward, in four days crossed the frontiers of the province of Cayas, and encamped on the banks of a river near a village called Tanico.*

The waters of this river, and of an adjacent lake, were impregnated with salt; so much so, as to leave a deposit in the blue sand which bordered their shores. The Indians were accustomed to collect this sand in baskets, made wide above and narrow below, and suspended in the air on a pole. Water was then poured upon the sand, and draining through, fell into a vessel beneath, carrying with it the saline particles. The water being then evaporated by boiling, the chrystalized salt remained at the bottom of the pot. This the Indians used as an article of traffic, exchanging it with their neighbours for skins and mantles.

The Spaniards, overjoyed at finding an article of which they were so much in need, remained here eight days making salt, and several who had suffered excessively for the want of it indulged so immoderately in the use of it, as to bring on maladies, and in some instances death.

* Supposed to have belonged to the tribe of the Tunicas.
—Vide Nuttall's *Arkansas*, p. 257.

Having laid in a large supply of salt, the army pursued their journey, and arriving at the province of Tula, marched four days through a wilderness, where they halted about mid-day in a beautiful plain, within half a league of the capital. In the afternoon, the Governor set out with a strong party of horse and foot, to reconnoitre the village. It was situated in a plain betwixt two streams. On their approach, the inhabitants seized their arms and sallied bravely forth, the women advancing to combat as fiercely as the men.

The Spaniards soon drove them back, and entered the village fighting. The savages fought from house to house, disdainng to ask for quarter, and struggling with fearless desperation. During the conflict, a soldier entered one of the houses and escaped to an upper chamber, used as a granary, where he found five women concealed. He made signs to them not to be alarmed, as he did not wish to injure them: his caution was unnecessary, for they flew on him like so many mastiffs upon a bull. In his struggle to shake them off, he thrust his leg through the slight partition of reeds, remaining seated on the floor at the mercy of those furies, who, with biting and

blows, were in a fair way of killing him. Notwithstanding the strait he was in, the sturdy soldier was ashamed to call for succour, because his antagonists were women.

At this moment another soldier happened to enter below, and seeing a naked leg through the ceiling, at first took it for the limb of an Indian, raised his sword and was about to strike, but observing it more narrowly, and hearing the clamour over head, he suspected the truth of the matter, and calling two of his companions, they ascended to the rescue of their comrade. So fierce, however, was the fury of the women, that not one of them would quit her hold upon the soldier, until they were all slain.

At a late hour the Governor drew off his men from the village, and returned to the camp; vexed at having been drawn into so unprofitable a battle, in which many of his followers were severely wounded.*

On the following day, the army entered the village and found it abandoned. During the afternoon, bands of horse scoured the country in every direction. They met several of the

* Portuguese Relation, c. 25, 26. Garcilaso de la Vega, L. 4, c. 12.

natives, but it was impossible to bring them in alive, or obtain any information from them. They threw themselves upon the ground, crying, "Kill me or leave me!" Nor could the death of some conquer the obstinacy of the rest.

In this village, the Spaniards found the flesh of buffaloes and numerous skins of the same animal; some in a raw state, others dressed for robes and blankets. They sought in vain, however, to meet with these animals alive, but still learnt that they existed in great herds to the northward. The inhabitants of the province of Tula differed from all the Indians they had yet seen. They had found the natives generally handsome and well formed; but these, both men and women, were extremely ill-favoured. Their heads were very large, and narrow at the top — a shape produced by being compressed by bandages from their birth to the age of nine or ten years. Their faces, particularly their lips, inside and out, were frightfully tattooed; and their dispositions corresponded with their hideous aspects.

On the fourth night after the Spaniards had gained possession of the village, the savages came in great numbers, and so silently, that

before the sentinels perceived them, they burst upon the encampment in three different parts. Loud were the shouts, and great was the confusion; for, in the darkness, it was impossible to distinguish friends from foes. The Spaniards shouted the names of the Virgin and Santiago, to prevent their wounding one another. The savages, likewise, shouted the name of Tula. Many of them, instead of bows and arrows had staves like pikes, two or three yards long which were new to the soldiers, and with which the Indians inflicted very severe wounds.

They fought stubbornly for more than an hour, and did not retreat to the woods until day began to dawn. The Spaniards did not pursue them, but returned to the village to take care of the wounded, of which there were many, although four only were killed.

After the battle, as usual, several of the Spaniards were scattered about the field examining the dead. Three foot soldiers and two on horseback were thus employed, when one of the former saw an Indian raise his head from among the bushes and immediately conceal it again. He gave the cry of Indians! Indians! The two men on horseback, thinking some of the enemy were coming in large

detachments, galloped off in different directions to meet them. In the meantime, the foot soldier who had discovered the Indian among the bushes ran up to kill him.

The savage, seeing he could not escape, stepped forward manfully to the encounter, armed with a Spanish battle-axe, which he had obtained that morning in the village. Taking it in both hands, he struck the shield of the soldier, severed it in two, and badly wounded his arm. The pain of the wound was so great and the blow so violent, that the Spaniard had not strength to attack his foe. The Indian then rushed upon the other soldier who was coming up, struck his shield in the same manner, broke it, wounded him likewise in the arm and disabled him. One of the horsemen seeing his companions so roughly handled, charged the savage, who took shelter beneath an oak tree. The Spaniard, not being able to ride under the tree, drew near and made several thrusts at the enemy, but could not reach him. The Indian rushed out, brandished the battle-axe as before, struck the horse across the shoulder, laying it open from the withers to the knee, and thus deprived the animal of the power of moving.

At this moment, Gonzalo Silvestre, who was on foot, came up. He had been in no haste, deeming two foot soldiers and three horsemen sufficient to manage one Indian. The latter, elated by his success, advanced to receive the Spaniard with great boldness. Grasping the battle-axe, he gave a blow similar to the two first; but Silvestre was more guarded than his companions. The weapon glanced from his shield and stuck in the ground. Silvestre having the enemy at an advantage, gave him a diagonal blow with his sword, which laid open his face and breast, and, entering his arm, nearly severed the wrist. The Infidel seizing the axe between the stump and his other hand, with a desperate leap, made an attempt to wound Silvestre in the face; but again warding off the blow with his shield, he gave the savage a sweeping cut across the waist, that passed through his naked body, and he fell dead, cut completely asunder.*

* The Inca says, that the blow was so powerful, and the sword so keen, that the Indian remained for a few seconds standing on his feet, and saying to the Spaniard, "Peace be with you," (*quedate en pas*,) fell dead in two halves! The feat, as described in the text, is sufficiently strong for belief.

CHAPTER XXVII.

The army arrive at Utiangué—The Governor determines to winter there—Preparations accordingly—Death of Juan Ortiz, the interpreter.

1541. THE Spaniards continued in the village of Tula twenty days, curing the wounded. During this time, they made many incursions in different parts of the province, which was very populous; but, although they captured many inhabitants, it was impossible either by presents or menaces, to acquire their friendship, or reduce them to obedience. So extreme was the ferocity of this tribe, that they were the dread of all their neighbours, who used the name of Tula as an object of nursery terror to their unruly children.

The army pursued their march in quest of

the province called Utiangue, or Autiamque; about ten days' journey, or eighty leagues from Tula. In that neighbourhood, the Indians said, there was a large lake, which the Spaniards hoped might prove an arm of the sea. Five days of their journey was over a rough, mountainous country, thickly wooded, where they found a village called Quipana;* but could take none of the inhabitants, the forests impeding the speed of their horses.

After a further march of a few days they entered the province of Utiangue. It was very fertile, containing a scattered but warlike population. Though incessantly harassed by ambuscades and skirmishes, the Spaniards proceeded until they reached the village of Utiangue, from which the province took its name. It contained many well built houses, and was situated in a fine plain, watered by the same river which passed through the province of Cayast, and was bordered by meadows that afforded excellent pasturage for horses. The town was abandoned by its inhabitants, except a few lingerers whom the Spaniards made pri-

* Supposed to be in the country of the Kappaws, or Quapaws.

† Supposed to be the Arkansas.

soners. The houses were well stocked with maize, small beans, nuts and plums.

As the season was far advanced, De Soto determined to winter here. Having encamped in the centre of the village, but apart from the houses, lest the Indians should set fire to them in the night, he commenced fortifying the place. The ground to be enclosed was measured out, and a portion assigned to each soldier, according to the number of slaves he owned. Thus every one had his task, and worked with emulation, the Indians bringing wood. In three days the village was surrounded by strong palisades, driven deep into the ground, and fastened by cross pieces.

In addition to the ample supply of provisions found in this village, the Spaniards foraged the surrounding country, and brought in abundance of maize, dried fruits, and various kinds of grain. They were extremely successful also in the chase; killing great numbers of deer. The province, moreover, abounded to an unusual degree, with rabbits, of which they found two species; one of the usual size, the other as large and strong as a hare and much fatter. These the Indians were accustomed to snare with running nooses.

The Cacique of the province sent messengers from time to time with presents and promises of friendly service, but never made his appearance. These messengers also, always armed at night, and, after delivering their message loitered about the camp, noticing the men, horses and weapons; shewing evidently that they only came as spies. The Governor, therefore, gave orders that no Indian should be admitted after sun-set; and one, persisting to enter, was killed by a sentinel; which put an end to all similar embassies.

The Spaniards were often waylaid and assaulted, when out on foraging and hunting parties, but generally managed to defeat their assailants.

During the winter, there were great falls of snow for upwards of a month, and at length fire-wood began to fail. Upon this, De Soto, turned out with all the horse, and by riding backward and forward, made a practicable road from the camp to a forest, about two bow-shots distant, which enabled the men to go thither and cut fuel.*

Upon the whole, though the season was

* Portuguese Narrative, c. 27.

severe, yet, having good quarters, and fuel and food in plenty, the adventurers passed the pleasantest winter they had experienced in the course of their arduous journey, enjoyed their present ease and abundance, with the greatest zest, which was sharpened by the frightful hardships and disasters they had encountered.

During their residence in this village, Juan Ortiz, the interpreter died. His death was a severe loss to the expedition; as he had been the main organ of communication between the Spaniards and natives. It is true, that even with his assistance, these communications were extremely imperfect, and subject to many misinterpretations, for he was acquainted merely with the language of the Indians in the neighbourhood of Espiritu Santo; whereas, in the march of the army, they were continually passing through new provinces, which had each its peculiar dialect. It was necessary, therefore, to have an Indian interpreter from almost every tribe, which rendered their mode of communication often difficult in the extreme.

In treating with a Cacique, the word given by the Governor to Juan Ortiz, was passed from mouth to mouth, of perhaps eight or ten Indians of different tribes, before it reached the

person to be addressed; and the reply was transmitted in the same tedious method to the Governor. Information, also, concerning any new region was collected in the same manner; subject to perversions and misunderstandings in the course of its transmission.

Hence arose continual errors among the Spaniards, as to the country and its inhabitants, which often bewildered them in their wanderings, and doubtless led to many sanguinary affrays with the natives which a proper understanding might have prevented.

The death of Juan Ortiz increased these disadvantages ten fold. Henceforth they had no other interpreter, but, the young Indian brought from Cofachiqui. He, however, had acquired but an imperfect knowledge of the Spanish language, and was deficient in the sagacity, general information and varied experience, which had distinguished Juan Ortiz.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Change in the views and plans of De Soto—He turns his steps towards the Mississippi—A soldier drowned in attempting to cross a lake—The Spaniards pass through the province of Anilco—Hostile bearing of the Cacique—Arrival at Guachoya.

1542. THE feelings and views of Hernando De Soto had recently undergone a change. The anger which had induced him so suddenly to alter his plans at Mauvila, and turn his back upon the sea, had gradually subsided. His hopes of finding a golden region were fast fading away. He had lost nearly half of his troops by fighting, sickness, and hardships of various kinds. The greater part of his horses, too, were slain or had perished. Of the remainder, many were lame, and all had been without shoes above a year. He was daily more

and more sensible, also of the loss he had sustained in the death of Juan Ortiz. The young Indian of Cofachiqui, who succeeded him as interpreter, made continual blunders as to the nature of the country, the rivers, routes and distances, and there was danger through his misinformation, that the army might be led into difficulties, and become perplexed or lost in the vast and trackless wildernesses they had to traverse.

De Soto bitterly repented having abandoned his original plan of joining his ships and establishing a colony on the shores of Achusi. Being now too far from the sea to attempt reaching it by a direct march, he resolved to give over his wandering in the interior, make the best of his way to the Mississippi, and choose some suitable village on its banks for a fortified post, where he might securely establish himself. He, moreover, determined to build two brigantines, in which some of his most confidential followers might descend the river, carry tidings of his safety to his wife and friends in Cuba, and procure reinforcements of men and horses, together with a supply of flocks, herds, seeds, and everything else necessary to colonize and secure the posses-

sion of the vast and fertile country he had overrun.*

As soon as the spring was sufficiently advanced, therefore, De Soto broke up his winter cantonment at Utiangue, and set out in a direction for the Rio Grande, or Mississippi. He had received intelligence of a village called Anilco, situated on the banks of a great river which emptied into the Mississippi; and towards that village he shaped his course.

After quitting Utiangue, he spent ten days at a village near the same river which passed by Cayas and Utiangue,† in the province of Ayas. During his stay there, a boat was constructed, in which the army crossed the stream, but were detained four days on its banks by snow and bad weather. They then journeyed through a low country, cut up by ravines, and perplexed with swamps. It was toilsome marching for the infantry. The troopers, were always up to the stirrup, sometimes to the knees in water, and now and then obliged to swim their horses.

At a town called Tultelpina, they were

* Portuguese Narrative, c. 28. Garcilaso de la Vega, lib. 5. 1. c. 3.

† Supposed to be the Arkansas.

checked in their march by a lake, which emptied itself into a river. The waters were high and turbulent. De Soto ordered one of his captains to embark in a canoe with five men and cross the lake. The impetuous current overturned the frail bark: some of the men clung to it, others to the trees that were standing in the water; but one, Francisco Bastian, a Spaniard of rank, was unfortunately drowned. De Soto then sought in vain to discover a route along the borders of the lake. At length, at the suggestion of two Indians of Tultelpina, he caused light rafts to be made of reeds and the wood-work of houses, and in this way transported his army across.*

Urging their way forward, the Spaniards arrived at the province of Anilco, and penetrated about thirty leagues, passing several villages, until they reached the principal one, which gave its name to the district. It was situated in an open country, on the banks of a copious stream, and contained about four hundred spacious houses, built round a square. The residence of the Cacique, as usual, was posted on a high artificial mound. The country was so well

* Portuguese Relation, c. 28.

peopled that there were several other villages in sight, and such quantities of maize, fruits, and pulse of various kinds, that the Spaniards pronounced it the most fertile and populous country they had met with except Coza and Apalachee.

On the strangers' approach the inhabitants made some show of resistance and skirmished slightly; but this was only to cover the retreat of their wives and children across the river on rafts and in canoes. Some few were taken before they could embark. Many more who had not been able to escape, were found in the village.

Soon after the Governor had taken up his quarters in the capital, an Indian of distinction attended by a few followers came to him in the name of the Cacique with presents of a mantle of martin skins and a string of large pearls. De Soto gave the chief of the embassy a collar of mother of pearl and some other trinkets, with which he went away apparently well satisfied. The negociation which opened thus favourably ended in nothing. The ambassadors proved to be mere spies sent to observe the strangers' force. The Cacique could not be induced to enter into friendly intercourse,

treating all messengers sent to him with great haughtiness and exhibiting signs of determined hostility.

The river that ran by the village of Anilco was the same that passed by Cayas and Utiangue; and De Soto was informed that at no great distance it emptied itself into the Mississippi.* He was told, also, that near the confluence of the two streams, on the banks of the Mississippi, was situated a large village called Guachoya, the capital of a populous and fruitful province of the same name, the Cacique of which was continually at war with the Chief of Anilco.

De Soto determined to proceed to this province in hopes that the sea might lie at no great distance from it. At any rate Guachoya might prove an advantageous site for building his brigantines and encamping his troops. As soon, therefore, as canoes could be procured and rafts constructed to cross the river, the army resumed its march over a hilly, uninhabited country, and in four days arrived at of Guachoya. It contained three hundred houses and was situated about a bow-shot from

* The river is supposed to be the Arkansas.

the Mississippi on two contiguous hills, between which was a small plain that served as a public square. The whole was fortified by palisades. The inhabitants had fled across the Mississippi in their canoes taking with them most of their effects; but Juan de Añasco foraged the neighbourhood and obtained a great supply of maize, beans, dried fruits, and cakes made of pressed plums, or persimmons.

CHAPTER XIX.

Meeting between De Soto and the Cacique Guachoya
—Añasco despatched to discover the sea—Expedition
by land and water against the Chieftain Anilco, and
the result.

1542. DE SOTO took up his quarters in the Cacique's house, which was large and commodious. Four days were passed in negotiations between him and the Cacique who was extremely distrustful of the Spaniards. At length the Chieftain's apprehensions were removed, and on the fifth day he visited the army. He came with a retinue of a hundred warriors decked in savage finery, and bringing presents of mantles, deer-skins, fish and dogs.

The Governor received Guachoya very courteously at the door of his mansion, and conducted him into the great saloon, or hall of the building. The Cacique's attendants ranged themselves round the apartment among the Spaniards, while their Chief and the Governor held a long conversation through the medium of interpreters, concerning the territories of the former.

In the midst of their conversation the Cacique happened to sneeze. Upon this, all his attendants bowed their heads, opened and closed their arms, and making other signs of veneration, saluted their prince with various phrases of the same purport—May the sun guard you—may the sun be with you—may the sun shine upon you—defend you—prosper you, and the like; each uttered the phrase that came first to his mind, and for a short time there was a universal murmuring of these compliments.*

Guachoya ate at the Governor's table. His followers remained in attendance and would not go to their own repast although repeatedly invited until their Chief had finished; they then dined in the soldiers' quarters where a

* Garcilaso de la Vega, P. 1, Lib. 5, c. 5.

general repast was provided. The Cacique lodged in a part of his own dwelling with a few of his personal attendants; but at sunset his warriors crossed to the opposite side of the river and returned in the morning. This they continued to do while the Spaniards remained in the village.

One of De Soto's first questions to the Cacique, was, whether he knew any thing of the sea. Guachoya, however, professed utter ignorance of any such vast body of water; his knowledge of the country down to the river did not extend beyond a great province called Quigualtanqui; the Cacique of which, he said, was the greatest chieftain in all these parts.

The Governor suspecting his ignorance to be feigned, despatched Juan de Añasco with eight troopers to explore the course of the river and ascertain whether the sea was near. De Añasco returned after eight days' absence, during which he had not been able to advance above fifteen leagues on account of the great windings of the river and the swamps by which it was bordered.*

This information determined De Soto to

* Portuguese Relation, c. 29.

build two brigantines at Gauchoya, and to establish his projected colony between that place and Anilco, in a fertile country, where supplies were to be easily had. In this settlement it was his intention to remain until the brigantines should return with reinforcements and supplies. To enable him to pursue these plans without molestation, it was important for him to conciliate the friendship of the Cacique Anilco, whose territories lay adjacent, and who would be enabled to render him much assistance as an ally, but great annoyance as an enemy.

Guachoya, apprehending the Governor's inclinations, advised him to return to the province of Anilco, offering to accompany and aid him with his people. As he would have to re-cross the river that ran by the village of Anilco, and united with the Mississippi, the Cacique offered to supply eighty large, and numerous small canoes. These would have to proceed seven leagues along the Mississippi, to the mouth of the river up which they would ascend to the village; the whole distance making a navigation of twenty leagues. Meanwhile the Governor and Cacique, with their forces, would proceed by land, so as

to arrive opposite the village at the same time with the canoes.

Arrangements were accordingly made. As soon as the canoes were ready, four thousand Indian warriors, besides the rowers, embarked in them; with these, the Governor sent Captain Juan de Guzman and his company, to command the canoes and keep the Indians in order. Three days were allowed for the voyage.

At the moment they pushed off from the shore, the Governor set out by land with his troops, accompanied by Guachoya at the head of two thousand warriors, besides those who carried provisions.

The two expeditions arrived opposite the village at the time appointed. The Cacique of Anilco was absent, but the inhabitants making a stand at the pass of the river, Nuño Tobar fell furiously upon them with a party of horse. Eager for the fight, the Spaniards charged so heedlessly, that each trooper found himself surrounded by a band of Indians. The latter, however, were so panic stricken, that they turned their backs and fled in wild disorder to the forests, amid the shouts of the pursuers

and the shrieks of the women and children.* Guachoya now gave full vent to his thirst for vengeance. In his alliance with the Spaniards, and in advising the General to re-visit this province, he had been actuated, like Casquin, solely by a secret desire to revenge himself upon an ancient enemy. The province of Anilco and that of Guachoya were in continual hostility; but the former had, for some time, obtained the advantage, and brought off many trophies gained in ambuscades, surprises, and midnight forrays; the mode in which the savages carried on their warfare.

On entering the conquered village, the first thought of the warriors of Guachoya was to attack the sepulchres of the Caciques. They removed the heads of their own countrymen stuck round the gate, replacing them with those of their enemies. They stripped the sepulchres of all the trophies, scalps and banners, taken from their nation in battle; carried off the relics and ornaments of the dead, threw down their coffins, and scattered about their bones, as had been done on a former occasion. Then scouring through the village, they massacred all

* Portuguese Narrative, c. 29.

they met, being chiefly old men, women and children, upon whom they inflicted the most horrible barbarities.

In all this they acted with such fury and haste, that the mischief was effected almost before De Soto was aware of it. He put an end to the carnage as soon as possible, reprimanded the Cacique severely, forbade any one to set fire to a house, or injure an Indian, under pain of death, and quitted the village as speedily as possible; taking care that his Indian allies should first pass the river, and not remain behind to do mischief.

His precautions were all ineffectual. He had scarcely disembarked and marched a league forward, when, on looking back, he saw a great smoke arising from Anilco, and found that several of the houses were already in flames. In fact, the warriors of Guachoya, being deterred from open hostility, had secretly placed coals among the straw roofs of the houses. These being parched with the summer heat, easily took fire, and burst into a blaze.

The Governor would have returned to extinguish the flames, but at this instant he saw many Indians of the neighbourhood running towards the village; therefore, leaving it to their care,

he continued his march, exceedingly vexed at having his friendly intentions towards Anilco thus defeated, but concealing his anger, lest he should likewise make an enemy of his crafty ally.*

* Garcilaso de la Vega, p. 1, lib. 5, c. 6. Herrera Decad. 7, lib. 7, c. 3.

CHAPTER XX.

Difficulties with the Cacique of Quigualtanqui—Illness and death of De Soto.

ON taking up his quarters again in the village of Guachoya, De Soto set to work with his usual energy and perseverance to construct the two brigantines. He ordered timber to be cut; collected all the ropes and cordage he could find in the neighbourhood, to serve for rigging; employed Indians to gather resin and gums from pines and other trees, and caused all the spikes and nails saved from the old piraguas to be put in order, and an additional quantity made. He had already, in his own mind, selected from among his faithful and trusty followers the officers and men who were to embark in the expedition. With

the remainder of his army, amounting to about five hundred men and fifty horses, he intended to await their return. While, therefore, he urged the building of the brigantines, he made diligent search for some fruitful region, where he could be sure of subsistence for his army, during the absence of his envoys.

Having heard much concerning the fertility of the great province already mentioned, named Quigualtanqui, which lay on the opposite side of the Mississippi, De Soto sent a party of horse and foot to explore it. The river was here about a mile in width, seventeen fathoms deep, and very rapid, having both shores thickly inhabited.* Collecting all the canoes of the village, and fastening the larger, two and two, together, he caused the cavalry to be passed over in them, while the infantry crossed in the smaller. They scoured the province of Quigualtanqui, and visited many hamlets, especially the principal one, containing five hundred houses, and immediately opposite to Guachoya. The habitations, however, were every where deserted; the inhabitants having fled, or hid themselves. The scouting party, therefore, re-

* Portuguese Narrative, c. 29.

turned, without having effected any thing, but giving glowing accounts of the evident fertility and populousness of the province.

These favourable reports determined De Soto to cross the river with his troops, as soon as the brigantines should be despatched, establish his head-quarters in the chief town of Quigualtanqui, and there spend the summer and winter that must intervene before the return of his envoys.

To his infinite vexation, however, a violent hostility was manifested on the part of Quigualtanqui. That Chieftain, being of a haughty character and possessing great power, was extremely tenacious of his territorial sway. He was incensed at the inroad of the Spanish scouts, and sent messengers to De Soto, swearing by the sun and moon, to wage a war of extermination against him and his people, should any of them dare again to enter his dominions.*

At an earlier period, a message of this kind would have been answered by De Soto by an inroad into the Cacique's dominions; but his spirits were gradually failing. He had

* Alonzo de Carmona.—Garcilaso de la Vega, p. 1, b. 5, c. 6.

brooded over his past error, in abandoning the sea coast until he was sick at heart; and as he saw the perils of his situation every moment increasing, new and powerful enemies continually springing up around him, while his scanty force was daily diminishing, he became anxious for the preservation of the remainder of his followers, and determined to avoid all further warfare. He sent a messenger, therefore, to the Cacique, soliciting his friendship. Availing himself of an Indian superstition with respect to himself, he informed the haughty Chieftain that he was the offspring of the Sun; the luminary which the natives professed to worship;—that as such, he had received the homage of the Caciques of all the provinces through which he had passed;—and, inviting Quigualtanqui to come and pay him similiar reverence, he promised to take him into especial favour and to reward him with inestimable gifts.

Meanwhile, the melancholy which had long preyed upon De Soto's spirits; his incessant anxiety of mind and fatigue of body, added perhaps to the influence of climate, brought on a slow fever, which at length confined him to his bed.

In the midst of his illness, he received a

reply from Quigualtanqui, by his own messenger. The stern warrior observed, that if what De Soto pretended were true, and he was really the offspring of the Sun, he might prove the fact, by drying up the great river; in which case he should be ready to come over and pay him homage. If he could not do so, he must know that Quigualtanqui, being the greatest Chieftain in the land, visited nobody; but received visits and tribute from all. If, therefore, De Soto wished to see him, he must cross the river to his territory. If he came as a friend, he should be received as such; if as an enemy, he would find Quigualtanqui and his men ready for battle, and resolved never to yield an inch of ground.*

This taunting reply irritated the harrassed spirit of De Soto and augmented his malady. He was still more irritated by the information that the Cacique was endeavouring to form a league of all the neighbouring Chieftains against him; and he dreaded that some new disasters might occur to delay if not to defeat his plans. From his sick bed, however, he maintained his usual vigilance for the safety of his army. The sentinels were doubled, and a rigid watch main-

* Portuguese narrative, c. 29,

tained. Each night the cavalry mounted guard in the village suburbs, their horses caprisoned, ready for action ; two troopers were constantly upon the patrol, alternately visiting the outposts, and detachments of crossbow men kept watch upon the river in canoes.*

The schemes, labours and anxieties of De Soto, however, were rapidly drawing to a close; day by day his malady increased, and his fever rose to such a height, that he felt convinced his last hour was at hand. He prepared for death with the steadfastness of a soldier, and the piety of a devout Catholic.

He made his will almost in cypher, for want of sufficient paper: then calling together the officers and soldiers of note, he nominated, as his successor to the titles and commands of Governor and Captain-General of the kingdom and provinces of Florida, Luis de Moscoso de Alvarado; the same whom, in the province of Chicaza, he had deposed from the office of Master of the Camp; and he charged the troops on the part of the Emperor, and in consideration of the virtues of Luis de

* Portuguese Relation, c. 29.

Moscoso, to obey him in the above capacities, until further orders should be received from government. To all this he required them to make oath with due form and solemnity.

When this was done, the dying Chieftain called to him, by twos and threes, the most noble of his army, and after them, ordering that the soldiers should enter by twenties and thirties, he took of all his last farewell, with great tenderness on his own part, and with many tears on theirs. He charged them to convert the natives to the Catholic faith, and augment the power of the Spanish crown, being himself cut off by death from the accomplishment of these great aims. He thanked them for the affection and fidelity which they had evinced, in fearlessly following his fortunes through such great trials, and expressed his deep regret that it was not in his power to shew his gratitude, by bestowing upon them such rewards as they merited. He begged forgiveness of all whom he had offended, and finally, entreated them in the most affectionate manner, to be peaceful and kind to one another. His fever raged violently, and continued to increase until the seventh day, when, having confessed

his sins with much humility and contrition, he expired.*

Thus died Hernando de Soto; one of the boldest of the many brave leaders, who figured in the first discoveries, and distinguished themselves in the wild warfare of the Western World. How proud and promising had been the commencement of his career! how humble and hapless its close! Cut off in the vigour of his days, for he was but forty-two years old when he expired—he perished in a strange and savage land, amid the din and tumult of a camp, and with merely a few rough soldiers to attend him; for nearly all were engaged in making preparations for their escape from the perils by which they were beset.

Hernando de Soto was well calculated to

* “He died,” says the Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, in his Chronicle, “like a Catholic Christian, imploring mercy of the most Holy Trinity; relying on the protection of the blood of Jesus Christ our Lord, the intercession of the Virgin, and of all the Celestial Court, and in the faith of the Roman Church.

“With these words, repeating them many times, this magnanimous and never-conquered cavalier, worthy of great dignities and titles, resigned his soul to God, deserving a better historian than an unlettered Indian.”

command the independent and chivalric spirits of which his army was composed; for, while his ideas of military discipline were very strict, and he severely punished every breach of military duty, he easily pardoned all other offences. No one was more prompt to notice and reward merit of whatever kind. He is said to have been courteous and engaging in his manners, patient and persevering under difficulties, encouraging his followers by his quiet endurance of suffering. In his own person, he was valiant in the extreme, and of such vigour of arm, that wherever he entered into battle, he is said to have hewn himself a path through the thickest of the enemy. Some of his biographers have accused him of cruelty towards the Indians; but, according to the Inca's account, we find him, in general, humane and merciful; striving to conciliate the natives by presents and kind messages, and only resorting to violent measures where the safety of himself and followers were at stake. A striking contrast to his humanity in this respect, will be presented in the conduct of his successor, Luis de Moscoso.

CHAPTER XXI.

The burial of De Soto—The Cacique sends two young Indians to be sacrificed to his manes—What Luis de Moscoso said in reply—Disposal of the Governor's effects.

1542. THE death of the Governor left his followers overwhelmed with grief. They felt as if they had been made orphans by his loss, as they had looked up to him as a father : and their sorrow was the greater, because they could not perform those solemn obsequies due to the remains of a commander so much beloved and honoured.

They feared to bury him publicly, and with becoming ceremonials, lest the Indians should discover the place of his interment, and outrage his remains, as they had done those of other Spaniards ; tearing them from their

graves, dismembering them, and hanging them piecemeal from the trees. If they had shown such indignities to the bodies of common soldiers, how much greater would they be likely to commit upon the body of their general? Besides, De Soto had impressed them with a very exalted opinion of his prudence and valour; and the Spaniards, therefore, dreaded lest, when the Indians discovered that the Spanish leader was dead, they should be induced to revolt, and fall upon their weakened and diminished army.*

For these reasons they buried him at midnight, sentinels being posted to keep the natives at a distance, that the sad ceremony might be safe from the observation of their spies. The place chosen for his sepulture was one of many broad and deep pits, in a plain near the village, whence the Indians had taken earth for their dwellings. Here he was interred in silence and in secret, amid the tears of priests and cavaliers, who were present at his mournful obsequies. The better to deceive the natives, and prevent their suspecting the place of his interment, they gave out, on the following

* Portuguese Relation, c. 30.

day, that the Governor was recovering from his malady, and, mounting their horses, assumed an appearance of rejoicing. In order that all traces of the grave might be lost, they caused much water to be sprinkled over it, and upon the surrounding plain, to prevent the dust from being raised by their horses. They then scoured the plain, galloping about the pits, and over the very grave of their commander; but it was difficult, under this cover of pretended gaiety, to conceal the real sadness of their hearts.

With all these precautions, they soon found out that the Indians suspected, not only the Governor's death, but the place where he lay buried; for in passing by the pits, they would stop, look round attentively on all sides, talk to one another, and make signs with their chins, directing, at the same time, their eyes toward the spot where the body was interred.

The Spaniards perceiving this, and feeling assured that the savages would search the whole plain until they found the body, determined to disinter it, and place it where it would be secure from violation. No place appeared better suited to their purpose than the Mississippi; but they first wished to ascertain whether there

was sufficient depth of water effectually to hide the body.

Accordingly, Juan de Añasco, and other officers, taking a mariner with them, embarked one evening in a canoe, under pretence of fishing; and sounding the river where it was a quarter of a league wide in mid-channel, they found a depth of nineteen fathoms. Here, therefore, they determined to deposit the corpse.

As there was no stone in the neighbourhood sufficiently heavy to sink it, they cut down an evergreen oak, and made an excavation in one side, the size of a man. On the following night they disinterred the body with all possible silence, and placing it in the trunk of the oak nailed planks over the aperture. This rustic coffin was then conveyed to the centre of the river, where, in presence of several priests and cavaliers, it was committed to the stream. They beheld it sink to the bottom, shedding many tears over it, and commending anew to heaven* the soul of the good cavalier.

The Indians, soon perceiving that the Governor was not with the army, nor buried, as

* Garcilaso de la Vega, part 1. lib 4. c. 8.

they had supposed, demanded of the Spaniards what had become of him. The general reply prepared for the occasion, was, that God had sent for him, to communicate to him great things, which he would be commissioned to perform so soon as he should return to earth. With this answer they were apparently contented.*

The Cacique, however, who believed that he was dead, sent two handsome young Indians to Moscoso, with a message, stating that it was the custom of his country, when any great prince died, to put a certain number of persons to death, in order that they might attend, and serve him on his journey to the land of spirits ; and for that purpose, these young men presented themselves. Luis de Moscoso replied, that the Governor was not dead, but gone to heaven, and had chosen some of his christian followers to accompany him there ; he therefore prayed the Cacique to receive again the two youths, and renounce for the future so barbarous a custom. He accordingly set the Indians at liberty on the spot, and ordered them to return home ; but one of them refused to go, saying that he would not serve a master who had condemned him to

* Alonzo de Carmona and Juan Coles. Garcilaso de la Vega, p. 1, lib 4. c. 8.

death without a cause, but would ever follow one who had saved his life.*

De Soto's effects, consisting in all of two slaves, three horses, and seven hundred swine, were disposed of by public sale. The slaves and horses were sold for three thousand crowns each; the money to be paid by the purchaser on the first discovery of any gold or silver mines, or as soon as he should be proprietor of a plantation in Florida. Should neither of these events come to pass, the buyer pledged himself to pay the money within a year. The swine were sold in like manner, at two hundred crowns a-piece. Henceforth, the greater number of the soldiers possessed this desirable article of food, which they ate on all days save Fridays, Saturdays, and the eves of festivals; these they rigidly observed according to the customs of the Roman Catholic Church.†

This abstinence they were not able to practice before, as they were frequently without meat for two or three months together, and when they found any, were glad to devour it, without regard to days.

* Portuguese Relation, c. 30.

† Portuguese Narrative, c. 13.

CHAPTER XXII.

The Spaniards commence their march to the westward under the command of Luis de Moscoso—Arrive at the province of Chaguate, where they find salt.

1542. AFTER their first grief for the loss of their illustrious commander, many in the army began to doubt whether it was really a calamity. Some even thought it matter of rejoicing; for numbers of officers and soldiers had long been disheartened by sufferings and their disappointment of expectations of golden spoils. Nothing but their respect for De Soto and the sway he maintained over them had prevented their abandoning so disastrous a country. They were now in hopes that the new Governor, who was devoutly inclined, would choose rather to seek rest and repose in some Christian land than follow out the schemes of De Soto.

Luis de Moscoso immediately called a council to deliberate upon what was to be done ; and it was determined by common consent of the leading men to quit the country as soon as possible. Moscoso requested each officer to deliver in his written opinion whether they should follow the course of the river or cross the country to the westward.

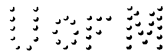
Juan de Añasco, the contador, was for carrying out the views and plans of De Soto. He not only opposed the idea of suddenly abandoning the country, but offered to guide the army to the frontiers of Mexico: for he piqued himself upon his knowledge of geography and presumed by its aid to deliver his comrades out of all their difficulties.

The proposition of Añasco derived support from the recollection of certain rumours which the Indians had brought some months before, that not far to the west there were other Spaniards then pursuing a course of conquest. These rumours were now received as true ; it was therefore concluded that those Spaniards must have sallied forth from Mexico to conquer new kingdoms ; and as according to the account received they could not be far distant, it was determined to march with all speed in that di-

rection and join them in their career of successful subjugation.

On the fourth or fifth of June, the army set out on its march, under the command of its new Governor and Captain-General, Luis de Moscoso ; directing its course westward, and determined to turn neither to the right nor to the left. By keeping in that direction it was concluded they must arrive at the confines of Mexico: not perceiving they were in a much higher latitude than that of New Spain.

A young Indian, sixteen or seventeen years of age, finely formed, and having a handsome countenance, followed the Spaniards of his own accord when they left this province. From suspicion that he might prove to be a spy, the circumstance was mentioned to Luis de Moscoso, who, ordering the stripling to be brought before him, demanded through his interpreters the cause of his leaving his parents and friends to follow a people whom he did not know? "Señor," replied he, "I am poor and an orphan; my parents died when I was very young and left me destitute. An Indian chief of my native village, a near relative of the Cacique, took compassion on me, led me to his home, and brought me up among his children. When you



left the village he was grievously sick and his life despaired of. His wife and children determined, in case he died, that I should be buried with him alive; because, they said, that my master having cherished and tenderly loved me, I must go with him to serve him in the world whither he had gone. Now, although I am deeply grateful to him for having sheltered and fostered me and love his memory, yet I have no desire to share his grave. Seeing no other way to escape this death but by seeking protection from the strangers, I preferred becoming their slave to being buried alive. This, alone, is the cause of my coming.”*

The Spaniards perceived by this and the instance already mentioned, that the superstitious custom of burying wives and servants alive with the dead bodies of their masters and husbands, was observed in this region as in all others yet discovered in the new world.

After quitting Guachoya, the Spaniards passed through the province of Catalte; then crossed a desert country to another province called Chaguata, where they arrived on the twentieth of June. The Cacique had already visited their

* Garcilaso de la Vega, Lib. 5, part 2, c. 2.

camp during the life of De Soto when quartered at Utiangué, and now resumed a friendly intercourse. Near the capital of this province they found the natives busily employed in making salt at a saline spring. Here the troops remained six days supplying themselves with this necessary article. They then continued their march westward in quest of the province of Aguacay, which they were told lay three days' journey onward.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Disappearance of Diego de Guzman—Cause of his
desertion.

1542. ON the second day of their march, the Governor was informed that one of their number, named Diego de Guzman, was missing. He immediately ordered a halt, and entered into a diligent investigation of the matter; apprehending that Guzman might have been detained or murdered by the Indians.

Diego de Guzman was one of the many young Spanish cavaliers, who had joined this expedition with romantic notions of conquest, of glory and of gain. He was of a good family, and rich, and enlisted in the enterprise, with costly raiment, splendid armour and weapons, and three fine horses. Unluckily, he was pas-

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sionately fond of play, and had but too frequent opportunities of indulging in it ; for the Spaniards while they were encamped, passed much of their leisure in gambling, as is usual with soldiers, and especially with such young adventurers, as formed a great part of this band of discoverers.

In the conflagration of Mauvila, all their cards being burnt, they made others of parchment, painted with admirable skill ; and, as they could not obtain a sufficient supply for the number of gamesters, the packs were lent from one to the other for limited periods. With these they gambled under trees, in their wigwams, or on the river banks.

Diego de Guzman was one of the keenest ; but a run of ill luck had gradually stripped him of all he had brought to the army, or captured on the march ; and but a few days previously he had lost his clothes, his arms, a horse, and a female captive, recently taken in a foray. De Guzman had honourably paid all his losses, but when he came to part with his captive, there was a struggle between pride and affection. The girl was but eighteen years of age, extremely beautiful, and having conceived a passion for her, he put off the winner,

with an assurance that he would give her up to him in the course of four or five days. De Guzman who had been seen in the camp the day before the march, was now missing, and the girl had disappeared likewise. On hearing all these circumstances, the Governor concluded that, ashamed of having lost his arms and steed, and unwilling to give up his Indian beauty, he had escaped with her to her tribe. He was confirmed in this suspicion, on hearing that the female was daughter of the Cacique of Chaguata.

The General now summoned before him four Chiefs of the province, who were among his escort, and ordered them to cause the Spaniard, who had deserted, to be sought out and brought to the camp; telling them, that unless he was produced, he should conclude that the soldier had been treacherously murdered, and should consequently revenge his death.

The chiefs, terrified for their own safety, sent messengers with speed. These returned declaring that De Guzman was at the dwelling of their Cacique, who was feasting him and treating him with all possible kindness and distinction, and that he could not be prevailed upon to return to the army.

Moscoso refused all credit to this story, and persisted in his surmises that De Guzman had been murdered. Upon this, one of the Chiefs turned to the Governor with a proud and lofty air. "We are not men," said he, "who would tell you falsehoods. If you doubt the truth of what the messengers have said, send one of us four to bring you some testimonial of the fact; and if he bring not back the Spaniard, or some satisfactory proof that he is alive and well, the three of us that remain in your hands will answer for his loss with our lives."

The proposition pleased the Governor and his officers; and after consultation, Baltazar de Gallegos, who was a friend and townsman of De Guzman, was instructed to write to him, condemning the step he had taken, and exhorting him to return and perform his duty as became a soldier; assuring him that his horse and arms should be restored, and others given to him in case of need. A message was also sent to the Cacique, threatening him with fire and sword, unless he delivered up the fugitive.

Next day the messenger returned, bringing back the letter of Gallegos, with the name of

De Guzman written upon it in charcoal; a proof that he was alive. He sent not a word, however, in reply to its contents; but the messenger declared that he had no intention nor wish to rejoin the army.

The Cacique, on his own part, sent word, assuring the Governor that he had used no force to detain Diego de Guzman, neither should he use any to compel him to depart; but would rather treat him with all possible honour and kindness as a son-in-law, who had restored to him a beloved daughter. He further declared that he would do the same to any of the strangers who might desire to remain with him. If, for having done his duty in this matter, the Governor thought proper to lay waste his lands and destroy his people, he had the power in his hands, and could act as he pleased.*

Moscoso, seeing that Diego de Guzman would not return, and feeling that the Cacique was justified in not delivering him up, abandoned all further attempt to recover him, and set the Indian chiefs at liberty, who continued, however, to attend him until he reached the frontier,

* Garcilaso de la Vega, part 1, Lib. 5, c. 2.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The army arrives at Naguatex—Have a severe conflict with the natives—Imminent peril of two troopers and four foot soldiers, and their rescue—Severe treatment of the Indian captives—Singular interview between the Cacique Naguatex and Moscoso—The Spaniards perplexed by a phenomenon.

1542. THE next province traversed by the Spaniards was named Aguacay, and abounded with salt; they encamped one evening on the borders of a lake, the waters of which were strongly impregnated with it. The natives formed the salt into small cakes, by means of earthen moulds, and used it as an article of traffic. At the capital of this province, the Spaniards fancied, from the replies of its inhabitants to their questions, that they had some knowledge of the South Sea; but it is

probable the Spaniards were deceived by the blunders of their interpreters.

After leaving Aguacay, they crossed the province of Maye, and on the twentieth of July, encamped beside a pleasant wood on the confines of Naguatex. They had scarcely come to a halt, when a body of Indians were observed hovering at a distance. A party of horse immediately advanced, and dashing into the midst of them, killed six and brought two prisoners to the camp. They confessed they were a scouting party sent by the Cacique to reconnoitre the strangers, and that Naguatex himself was at hand with his warriors, aided by two neighbouring chieftains. While they were yet talking, the enemy appeared in two battalions, and assailed the camp, but were soon put to flight. The horse pursued them, and fell into an ambush which had been laid for them by two other bands, but these they quickly succeeded in routing.

Two troopers and four foot soldiers, having pursued the first party too hotly, were surrounded and assailed on all sides. The troopers behaved manfully, wheeling round their more exposed companions, charging the savages with their horses, and keeping them

at bay with their spears, at the same time calling out lustily for aid. Their cries reaching the camp, twelve troopers galloped to their assistance: the Indians fled at their approach, but several were slain and one of them was taken prisoner. Moscoso immediately ordered that his nose and right arm should be cut off, and sent him, thus cruelly mutilated to Naguatax, with a threat that he would next morning enter his country with fire and sword.

The ensuing day Moscoso pushed forward to execute his threats, but a large river intervened between him and the Cacique's residence. He halted on the banks, and beheld a powerful force collected on the opposite side to oppose his passage. Not knowing the ford, and several of the men and horses being wounded, he took counsel in his wrath, and drawing back about quarter of a league from the river, encamped near a village by a clear and beautiful wood, preferring the open-air to any habitation, as the weather was calm and pleasant. Here he remained a few days, in order that his troops might have time to recover from their wounds and fatigues. During his stay, he sent a body of horse, who explored the river, forded it in two places, in spite of opposi-

tion from the natives, and found a populous and fruitful country on the other side.

The Governor, having now had time to recover from his anger, sent an Indian with a message to the Cacique of Naguatex, offering him pardon for the past, on condition of repentance and submission; but otherwise denouncing vengeance against him. The message had the desired effect. The Indian returned with a reply from the Cacique, saying, that he would make his appearance next day. On the following morning a great number of Naguatex's principal subjects came to the Spanish camp, announced that their Cacique was at hand, and having apparently taken notice of the Governor's looks and the disposition of his men, returned to their chieftain, who was shortly after seen approaching. A large body of his chief warriors marched two and two in front, all weeping and lamenting, as if in contrition for the past. When the head couple arrived in presence of Moscoso, the whole band halted, fell back on each side, and formed a lane, up which the Cacique advanced. Bending in a supplicating manner before the Governor, he begged forgiveness for what he had done, attributing his rash hostility to the bad counsels of one

of his brothers, who had fallen in the fight. He acknowledged the Spaniards to be immortal, the Governor invincible, and concluded by tendering his obedience and services. Moscoso accepted his offered allegiance, dismissed him with assurances of friendship, and four days afterwards, breaking up his camp, he marched to the river side, but was surprised to find it swollen and impassable, although it was summer time, and no rain had fallen for a month. The Indians, however, assured him, that this swelling of the river often happened without rain, and generally during the increase of the moon.

The Spaniards, perplexed at this phenomenon, being little acquainted with the great extent of these rivers, and the sudden effects of rain among the distant mountains and extensive prairies where they take their rise, surmised that the swellings, during the waxing of the moon, might be caused by the influx of the sea into the river, although none of the natives had any knowledge of the sea.

At the end of eight days the river had subsided sufficiently to be fordable. The army then crossed; but, on coming to the Cacique's

capital they found it abandoned. The Governor encamped in the open fields, and sent for Naguatex to come to him and furnish him with a guide. The Cacique, however, was afraid to venture into the camp. Upon this, the ire of Moscoso was again kindled, and he dispatched two captains with troops of horse to burn the villages and make captives of the inhabitants. The country was soon wrapped in smoke and flame, and several natives were captured. The Cacique was again brought to terms, and sent several of his subjects as hostages, together with three guides who understood the language of the countries through which the Spaniards were to pass. The Governor was pacified, and set forward on his march. Such were the circumstances that attended the Spaniards sojourn in the province of Naguatex*.

* The name of this province is spelled in the same manner (Naguatex) both in the Spanish and Portuguese Narratives. It has been identified with Nachitoches, by some modern writers, who suppose the Cacique's capital to have stood on the site of the present town of that name. It appears to the author, however, that the modern Nachitoches lies to the south of Moscoso's

route, though it may have been called after the old Indian village, situated more to the northward. It is almost impossible to identify any of the places visited by the Spaniards in their wild wanderings west of the Mississippi.

CHAPTER XXV.

Vague tidings of Europeans to the west—Wanderings in a wilderness—Treachery of an old Indian guide, and his fate—The hunting grounds of the Far West.

1542. THE army now pressed forward, by forced marches, for upwards of a hundred leagues, through various provinces, more or less populous and fertile; but some of them extremely barren, and almost uninhabited. The Portuguese narrative of the expedition gives the names of some of these provinces, such as Missobone, Lacane, Mandacao, Socatino, and Guasco. In one province, the Spaniards observed wooden crosses placed on the tops of the houses, and were struck with the sight of

this Christian emblem. They began to flatter themselves that they were approaching the confines of New Spain, and made inquiries in every province they entered, whether the inhabitants knew any Christian people to the west. Where all intelligence had to pass from mouth to mouth, through several interpreters, indifferently acquainted with each other's language, and finally to be communicated by an Indian lad, but moderately versed in Spanish, it is easy to perceive what vague and erroneous ideas must have been imparted. Some of the natives, it is probable, wilfully deceived the Spaniards; others misunderstood the kind of people about whom they were inquiring. In this way they received tidings, as they thought, of Europeans who had been seen farther to the west; and whom they persuaded themselves were parties of discoverers making incursions from New Spain. They were elated with the hopes of meeting with some of these parties or, at any rate, of coming to regions subjugated and colonised by their countrymen, where they would no longer be in danger of perishing in a trackless wilderness, but might choose either to abide securely in the new world, or return to their native country.

Thus they went on, from place to place, lured by false hopes and idle tales. When they reached places where it had been asserted they would come upon the traces of white men, the inhabitants declared their utter ignorance of any such people. In a transport of disappointment, Moscoso ordered several poor savages to be put to the rack. This only served to extort false replies, suited to his wishes, but which led to farther unprofitable wandering and additional disappointment.*

The Spanish commander and his followers, moreover, suffered extremely for want of intelligent and faithful guides. Sometimes they erred from misinterpretation of the routes, at others they were purposely led astray. When they had journeyed far to the west, they came to a vast uninhabited region, where after wandering for many days, until their provisions were exhausted, they had nothing to appease their hunger but herbs and roots. To their great dismay, also, they found that an old Indian warrior, who had been furnished by a Cacique as guide, was leading them in a circle. Moscoso, suspecting his fidelity, ordered him

* Garcilaso de la Vega. L. 5. p. 1, c. 2.

to be tied to a tree, and the dogs let loose upon him. One of them sprang upon him instantly, and began to shake him. The savage, in his terror, confessed that he had been ordered by his Cacique to bewilder them in uninhabited deserts, but offered to take them in three days, to a populous country to the west. Moscoso, however, yielding to the impulses of his indignation at this treachery, again ordered the dogs to be let loose, who, ravenous with hunger, tore the unfortunate wretch to pieces.

Having thus gratified their passion, the Spaniards found themselves worse off than before, for they had no one to guide them, as permission had been given to the other Indians, who had brought the supplies, to return home. In this dilemma, they followed the directions of their victim, by marching westward; thus giving credit, after his death, to what they disbelieved while he was living.

They travelled three days, suffering excessively for want of food. Fortunately the forests were clear and open; for had these been so thick as those which the troops had formerly traversed, they must have perished with hunger before they could have made their way through them. Travelling always towards the

west, at the end of three days the Spaniards descried, from a rising ground, signs of human habitations; but on their approach they found the country generally barren and the villages abandoned. These differed from those they had before visited in other provinces, the houses being scattered about the fields in groups of four and five, rudely constructed, and resembling the hovels erected in melon-fields in Spain for the accommodation of persons employed to guard the fruit, rather than habitable houses. In these cabins they found abundance of fresh buffalo meat, with which they appeased their hunger. There were also the hides of many buffalos, recently flayed; but the Spaniards could never meet with the living animals. From the abundant traces of horned cattle thus found in the habitations they called this the Province of the Vaqueros, or Herdsmen.*

* It is evident that the Spaniards were on the hunting grounds of the Far West—the great buffalo prairies; and most probably the scattered and slight wigwams thus visited were mere hunting camps.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Feats of individual prowess by Indians of the Far West.

1542. THE Indians of the Far West have always been noted for their gallant and martial bearing, and their proneness to feats of individual prowess. In their wandering through this wild region, the Spaniards witnessed frequent instances, two or three of which are worthy of especial notice. In the course of their march through the province of Los Vaqueros, having encamped one afternoon in an open plain, the soldiers stretched themselves on the ground, while their native attendants prepared their repast. As they were thus enjoying their repose, they observed an Indian warrior sally out of an adjacent wood and

approach the camp. He was gaily painted; a bow was in his hand, a quiver of arrows over his right shoulder, and waving plumes adorned his head.

The Spaniards seeing him advance alone, and peacefully, imagining that he was charged with some message from his Cacique to the Governor, allowed him to draw nigh. He came within fifty paces of a group of soldiers, who were conversing together; then, suddenly fixing an arrow in his bow, he sent it into the midst of them.

Seeing him bend his bow, some of the Spaniards sprang aside, others threw themselves upon the ground. The arrow whistled by without touching them, but flying beyond, where five or six female Indians were preparing dinner for their masters, under a tree, it struck one in the shoulders, and passing through her body, buried itself in the bosom of another;—both fell and expired. The savage then turned, and fled with surprising speed to the woods. The Spaniards beat the alarm and shouted after him. Baltazar de Gallegos, being by chance on horseback, heard the shout, and saw the savage flying; suspecting the cause, he gave chase, overtook

him close to the wood, and transfixed him with his lance. Three days after this, the army halted for a day in a beautiful plain of the same province. During their halt they saw two Indian warriors crossing the plain. They were fine looking fellows, decorated with lofty plumes, bearing their bows in their hands, and their quivers at their backs. They came to within two hundred paces of the camp, and then began to walk round a large nut-tree, not side by side, but circling in opposite directions, so as to pass each other, and guard one another's backs. In this way they continued all day, without deigning to notice the Negroes, Indians, women and boys who occasionally passed near them, carrying water and wood.

The Spaniards understanding from this that the object of the coming of these Indians referred to them and not to their own countrymen, forthwith reported what they had observed to the Governor, who ordered that no soldier should go out to them.

The savages continued their circumvolutions waiting patiently as it would seem for some of the Spaniards to take up this singular challenge. It was near sunset when a com-

pany of horse who had been out since morning scouring the country returned to the camp. Their quarters happening to be near the place where this extraordinary scene was acting, observing it, they asked, "what Indians are these?" Having learnt the Governor's order that the savages should not be molested, all obeyed except a headlong soldier named Juan Paez, who eager to exhibit his valour, spurred towards them. When the Indians saw but a single Spaniard advancing to attack them, the one who was nearest to Paez stepped forth to receive him, and the other retiring placed himself under a tree; thus showing a desire of fighting man to man, and disregarding the Spaniard's advantage in being mounted. The soldier charged the savage at full speed, but the latter waited with an arrow in his bow until his adversary came within shot; he then sped his shaft. It struck Juan Paez in the muscular part of the left arm, passed through it and through both sides of a sleeve of mail, and remained crossed in the wound. The arm dropped powerless, the reins slipped from the hand, and the horse feeling them fall, stopped of a sudden as horses are often trained to do.

The companions of Juan Paez who had not

yet alighted seeing his peril, galloped to his rescue. The Indians not choosing to encounter such odds fled to a neighbouring wood, but before they could reach it were overtaken and lanced to death. In this affair the savages certainly showed a spirit of chivalry and a punctilio as to the laws of duel, which merited a better return at the hands of Spanish cavaliers.*

* Garcilaso de la Vega, L. 5. p. 2, c. 4.

CHAPTER XXVII.

The Spaniards come in sight of high mountains to the west
→Exploring parties sent out to discover the country—
—The report they bring back—Moscoso calls a council
of his officers—Their determination.

1542. AFTER traversing the wild waste of country which the Spaniards named the Province of Los Vaqueros, they came to a river called Daycao,—a favourite hunting resort of the Indians. Great quantities of deer were feeding along its banks. Having learned that the country beyond was inhabited, Moscoso sent a party of horse to cross the river and reconnoitre the neighbourhood. They found a village consisting of a few miserable hovels and captured two of the inhabitants ; but none of the interpreters could understand their language.

The Spaniards now perceiving a chain of mountains and extensive forests to the west, and ascertaining that the country was without inhabitants, their hearts began to fail them. The hunger and toil they had already experienced rendered them loth to penetrate those savage regions. The Governor, therefore, determined to remain encamped and send out light parties to explore the country in the direction they were travelling. Three bands of horsemen being accordingly despatched each in a different direction, and having penetrated to the distance of thirty leagues, they found it sterile, thinly peopled and ascertained that these evils would increase the further they proceeded. They captured some of the inhabitants who assured them that further on it was still more destitute; the natives neither living in villages, dwelling in houses, nor cultivating the soil, but were a wandering people roving in bands gathering fruits and herbs and roots of spontaneous growth, depending occasionally upon hunting and fishing for subsistence, and passing from place to place according as the seasons were favourable to their pursuits.*

* This description answers to the character and habits of the Pawnees, Comanches, and other tribes of the Far West.

At the end of fifteen days the exploring parties had all returned to the camp bringing nearly the same accounts. Their united reports embarrassed the Governor not a little. To prosecute his march to New Spain through such a country as that described would be to run the risk of losing himself and his troops in barren and trackless deserts. Recollecting what had been related by Alvar Nuñez of tribes of Indians which he had met with unsettled in their abodes, wandering about like the wild Arabs, feeding on roots and herbs and the produce of the chase, Moscoso fancied that similar savage hordes roved about the country before him. Indeed it was probable that all the rumours he had heard of Christians seen by the Indians might relate to Alvar Nuñez and his companions, who on their way to New Spain after their shipwreck with Pamphilo de Narvaez had passed as captives from tribe to tribe in traversing these lands. It is true they kept near the sea coast far to the south of the track of Moscoso, but the fame of such wonderful strangers might have penetrated to the interior; for reports are carried to vast distances among Indian tribes. The crosses also observed by Moscoso in one of the provinces through

which he had passed, might have been put up by the natives as talismans, in consequence of the fame of apparently miraculous cures performed by Alvar Nuñez and his men, who always carried a cross in their hands, and made the sign of the cross over their patients.

The delusive reports, therefore, of Christians to the West which had encouraged the Spaniards to proceed, had now died away. They had nothing but savage wastes before them, infested by a barbarous people with whom it was impossible to keep up a friendly understanding for want of interpreters. It was already the beginning of October; if they lingered much longer the rains and snows of winter would cut off their return and they might perish with cold and hunger. Moscoso was weary in soul and body, and longed to be in a place where his sleep might not be broken by continual alarms. Calling a council of his officers, he proposed that they should give up all farther progress to the west, make the best of their way back to the Mississippi, build vessels there and descend that river to the ocean.

The proposition was by no means relished by some, who notwithstanding all their sufferings and disappointments had still a lingering

hope of finding a country sufficiently rich to repay them for all their toils. They represented that Alvar Nuñez Caboza de Vaca had told the Emperor of his having visited a district where cotton grew, and where he saw gold, silver and precious stones; it was consequently evident they had not yet come to those regions of which Alvar Nuñez spoke, but might do so by keeping forward. Besides they had actually met with cotton mantles and Turquoises at a province called Guasco, and had understood from the natives that these were brought from a country to the west; which was doubtless the country that Alvar Nuñez had spoken of. They were, therefore, for persisting in their perilous march westward; nay, some of them declared they would rather perish in the wilderness than return beggared and miserable to Europe from an expedition undertaken with such high and vaunting anticipations.

More prudent councils, however, prevailed, and after much deliberation it was determined to retrace their steps to the Mississippi.

NOTE.—The march of Moscoso west of the Mississippi has been given from the Spanish and Portuguese accounts; but they vary so much on some points, and are so vague

on others ; the regions to which they relate are so vast, and, until very recently, were so little known, that it is next to impossible to trace the wanderers' route with anything approaching to precision. They evidently traversed the hunting grounds of the Far West, the range of the buffalo, and got upon the upper prairies, which, in many parts, are little better than deserts. The river Decayo, which is only mentioned by the Portuguese Narrator, has been supposed to be the 'Rio del Oro' of Cabeza de Vaca. He makes them return from the banks of this river ; but the Spanish Historian affirms, that they saw great chains of mountains and forests to the west, which they understood were uninhabited. It has been conjectured that these were the skirts of the Rocky Mountains. As, according to the Portuguese account, the Spaniards departed from the banks of the Mississippi for the Far West, on the fifth of June, and did not get back until the beginning of December, they were six months on this march and countermarch, which, with all their halting, would give them time to penetrate a great distance into the interior.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Harrassing march of the Spaniards—The trooper—His misadventure.

1542. THE Spaniards had now a long and dreary march before them, with no favorable prospect to cheer them on, and a country to traverse, the savage inhabitants of which had been rendered hostile by their previous invasion, and its recourses laid waste by their foraging parties. They endeavoured, as much as possible, to remedy these disadvantages by altering their course towards the south, so as to avoid the desolate tracts which they had recently traversed, and in hopes of finding regions more abundant in provisions.

They travelled by forced marches, taking every precaution not to provoke the natives ;

the latter, however, were on the alert, and harassed them at all hours of the day and night. Sometimes the Indians concealed themselves in woods, by which the Spaniards had to pass; in the more open country they lay on the ground covered by tall grass and weeds, and as the soldiers, seeing no enemy, came carelessly along, the wily savages suddenly sprang up, discharged their arrows, and immediately made their escape.

These assaults were so frequent, that one band was scarcely repulsed by the vanguard when another attacked the rear, and the line of march was often assailed in three or four places at the same time, by which the army suffered great loss, both of men and horses. In fact, in this province of Los Vaqueros, the Spaniards, without coming hand to hand with the enemy, received more injury than in any other through which they passed: this especially happened in the course of the last day's march, during which their route was extremely arduous, laying through woods, and across streams and ravines, and other dangerous passes, peculiarly fit for ambush and surprise. Here the savages, who were well acquainted with the ground, had them at their mercy, waylaying them

at every step, wounding men and horses, and the native servants who accompanied the army.

The last of these assaults happened as they crossed a brook overhung with trees and thickets, shortly before their arrival at the place of encampment. Just as one of the horsemen, named Sanjurge, was in the middle of the stream, an arrow discharged from among the bushes on the bank, struck him in the rear, pierced his cuirass of mail, passed through the muscle of his right thigh, then through the saddle tree and paddings, and buried itself in the horse. The wounded animal sprang out of the water, galloped to the plain, and went on plunging and kicking to disengage itself from the arrow and its rider.

Sanjurge's comrades hastened to his assistance. Finding him nailed, in a manner, to the saddle, and the army having halted close by, they led him on horseback, to his allotted quarters. Lifting him gently from his seat, they cut the shaft between the saddle and the wound; after which, taking off the saddle, they found that the injury to the horse was slight. What surprised them, however, was, that the shaft, which had penetrated through so many substances, was a

mere reed, with the end hardened in the fire. Such was the vigour of arm with which these Indian archers plied their bows.

This Sanjurge had enjoyed a kind of charlatan reputation among the soldiers, for curing wounds with oil, wool, and by certain words, which he called a charm. All the oil and wool, however, having been burnt at the battle of Mauvila, Sanjurge's ~~miraculous cures~~ were at an end. His whole surgical skill being confined to his nostrum and charm, he was now fain to call in the aid of the surgeon to extract the head of an arrow lodged in his knee. This caused him so much pain, that he railed at the operator for a bungler, swearing that he would rather die than be placed again under his hands. The surgeon replied, that he might die before he would have anything further to do with him.

In his present wounded state, therefore, Sanjurge was in a sad dilemma, having no nostrums of his own, and the surgeon refusing to visit him. At length he thought of a substitute for his old remedy; making use of hog's lard, instead of oil, and the shreds of an Indian mantle, instead of wool, he dressed his wound with them, and pronounced his vaunted charm.

Faith and a good constitution work miracles in quackery. In the course of four days Sanjurge had so far recovered as to resume his saddle, galloping up and down among the soldiers, whose belief in the efficacy of his nostrum and charm became stronger than ever.*

* Garcilaso de la Vega, part 2. lib. 5. c. 5.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Francisco, the Genoese, with several of his comrades lie in ambush to entrap the natives—Their severe skirmish with an Indian, and the result.

1542. AFTER quitting the disastrous province of Los Vaqueros, the Spaniards continued for twenty days, by forced marches, through other lands, of which they did not know the name, taking little pains to gain information, their only object now being to reach the Mississippi.

Although they avoided all pitched battles with the natives, they continued to be harassed by them incessantly. If a soldier chanced to wander a short distance from his comrades, he was instantly shot. In this manner no less than forty Spaniards were picked off by lurking

foes. By night the Indians would enter the camp on all fours, and drawing themselves along like snakes, without being heard, shoot horses, and even sentinels who were off their guard.

One day, when the army was about to march, Francisco, the Genoese carpenter, obtained the Governor's permission for himself and several troopers, who were in want of servants, to lie in ambush at the place of encampment; the Indians being accustomed to visit those places as soon as the Spaniards had abandoned them, to pick up any articles the latter might have left behind.

Accordingly, a dozen horse and twelve foot concealed themselves in a thick clump of trees, one of their companions climbing to the top of the highest to look out and give notice if any Indians approached. In four sallies they captured fourteen of the enemy without resistance. These they divided among themselves, two falling to the share of Francisco, the shipwright, as leader of the detachment. The party would then have rejoined the army, but Francisco refused, alleging that he wanted another Indian, and would not return until he had captured one.

All the efforts of his comrades to shake this

determination were vain. Each offered to give up the Indian that had fallen to his share, but their leader refused to accept the boon. Yielding, therefore, to his obstinacy, they remained with him in ambush.

In a little while the sentinel in the tree gave warning that an Indian was near. One of the horsemen, the same Juan Paez who had recently been wounded in the arm, dashed forward with his wonted impetuosity, and rode at him full speed. The Indian, as usual, taking refuge under a tree, Paez galloped close by him giving a passing thrust with his lance across the left arm at the savage. He missed his aim, but his enemy was more successful; for, as the horse passed, he drew an arrow to the head, and buried it just behind the left stirrup leather. The horse plunged several paces forward and fell dead. Francisco de Bolanos, a comrade and townsman of Paez, followed close behind him, attacked the Indian in the same way, and failing likewise in his blow, his horse received a similar wound, and went stumbling forward beside his predecessor.

The two dismounted horsemen recovering from their fall, attacked the foe with their

lances, while from the other side, a cavalier, named Juan de Vega, galloped towards him on horseback. The savage, thus assailed on both sides, rushed forth from under the tree to encounter the horseman, knowing that if he should kill the horse, he could easily escape from his dismounted antagonists by his superior swiftness of foot.

With this intent, as the animal came towards him full speed, he discharged at its breast an arrow, which would have cleft its heart but for a breast-plate of three folds of tough bull hide with which its rider had provided it. The arrow passed through the breast-plate, and penetrated a hand's breadth into the flesh; nevertheless the horse continued its career, and Juan de Vega transfixed the savage with his lance.

The Spaniards grieved for the loss of the two horses, the more valuable now that their number was so much diminished; but their chagrin was doubly heightened when they observed the enemy who had cost them so dear. Instead of being well made and muscular, like most of the natives, he was small, lank, and diminutive; his form giving no promise

of the energy of his spirit. Cursing their misfortune, and the wilfulness of Francisco, which had caused it, they set forward with their companions to re-join the army.*

* Garcilaso de la Vega, p. 2. lib. 5. c. 5 and 6.

CHAPTER XXX.

They pass through the Province of Chaguete, Moscoso despatches a party of twelve troopers after Diego de Guzman—Sufferings of the army—Their arrival at the Province of Anilco and their despondency—Cheered by news of the fertile country of Aminoya—Añasco despatched to that province, and what he found there.

1542. THE Spaniards continued their weary journey with similar disastrous adventures. Fearful of going too far south, and of arriving at the Mississippi below the province of Guachoya, which was the point they wished to reach, they inclined to the north-east, so as to get into the track they had made on their western course.

This led them back through the province of

Naguatex, where they found the villages which they had burnt already rebuilt, and the houses well stocked with maize. In this province, the natives made earthenware of a tolerably good quality.

In passing through the province of Chaguete, Moscoso thought of Diego de Guzman, who had taken refuge among the natives, and sent twelve troopers in search of him; but he had received notice of their approach from the Indian spies, and concealed himself. The army, in the mean time, were suffering from scarcity of food, so that the Governor, seeing Guzman was bent upon remaining among his new friends, gave up all further search after him, and proceeded on his march.

The winter now set in with great rigour: it was accompanied with heavy rains, violent gales and extreme cold; yet in their eagerness to arrive at the termination of their journey, the troops continued to press forward travelling all day, and arriving at their place of encampment just before nightfall, drenched with rain, and covered with mud. They had then to go in quest of food, and were generally compelled to obtain it by force of arms, and sometimes at the expense of many lives.

The rivers became swollen by the rain; even the brooks were no longer fordable, so that almost every day, the soldiers were obliged to make rafts to cross them. At some of the rivers they were detained seven or eight days, by the unceasing opposition of their enemies, and the want of sufficient materials for constructing rafts. Often too, at night they had no place to lie upon, the ground being covered with mud and water. The cavalry passed the night sitting upon their horses, and the water was up to the knees of the infantry. For clothing they had merely jackets of chamois and other skins, belted round them, which served for shirt, doublet and coat, and was almost always wet through. They were in general bare legged, without shoes or sandals.

Both men and horses began to sicken and die under such dreadful privations. Every day two, three, and at one time, seven Spaniards fell victims to the hardships of this journey, and almost all the Indian servants perished. There were no means of carrying the sick and dying, for many of the horses were infirm, and those that were well, were reserved to repel the constant attacks of a vigilant enemy. The sick therefore, dragged their steps forward as long

as they could, and often died by the way, while the survivors, in their haste to proceed, scarcely stayed to bury them, but left them half covered with earth, and sometimes entirely unburied. Yet in spite of sickness and exhaustion, the army never failed to post sentinels, and keep up their camp-guard at night in order to prevent surprise.

At length they arrived at the fertile province of Anilco, the Cacique of which had experienced such rough treatment from them, and their savage ally, Guachoya, on their previous visit. They had been cheering themselves on their march with the prospect of relief in this province, which abounded in maize, and of procuring a sufficient supply to sustain them during the time necessary for the construction of their vessels; to their bitter disappointment, however, they found the province of Anilco almost destitute of maize, and had the additional mortification of knowing that they were the cause of this scarcity. The hostilities they had pursued against Anilco, during their residence at Guachoya, had deterred the inhabitants from cultivating their lands; thus seed-time passed

unimproved, and the year had produced no harvest.

Many of the Spaniards, worn out by past trials, could not support this new disappointment, but gave way to despair. Without a supply of maize, it would be impossible to subsist through the winter, or to sustain the daily and protracted toils of building the vessels for their departure. Their imaginations magnified the difficulties before them, and painted every thing in the most gloomy colours. How were they to construct vessels fitted to stand a sea voyage, destitute as they were of pitch and tar, of sails and cordage? How were they to navigate, without map, or sea-chart, or pilot?—how were they to ascertain at what place the great river on which they were to embark, mingled with the ocean? They sorely lamented having returned from the Far West, and given up their project of reaching New Spain by land. As to the plan of escaping by sea, it seemed as if nothing short of a miracle could enable them to carry it into effect.

Such were the despondings of many; and indeed, a general gloom prevailed through the camp, when they were again encouraged by intelligence derived from some Indians of

Anilco, who told them, that, at the distance of two days journey, on the banks of the Mississippi, there were two towns near each other, in the country of Aminoya, in which they would probably find maize and other provisions in abundance.

On receiving this cheering intelligence, Moscoso immediately detached Juan de Añasco, with a strong party of horse and foot, to visit those places*. They were accompanied by several Indians of Anilco, who were at war with those of Aminoya. After a severe march of two days, they arrived at the towns, which were situated close together, in an open country, and surrounded by a creek or ditch, filled with water from the Mississippi, so as to form an island.

De Añasco entered the towns without opposition, the inhabitants having abandoned them on their approach. To the great joy of the Spaniards, the houses were abundantly stocked with maize and other grain; likewise with vegetables, nuts, acorns, and dried fruits, such as grapes and plums. In one house they found an old woman, too infirm to make her escape.

* Portuguese Relation, c. 35.

She asked them why they came thither. They replied, to winter. The old beldam shook her head, and told them that was no place for winter quarters. Every fourteen years, she said, there was such a rise of the great river, as to inundate all the surrounding country, and compel the inhabitants to take refuge in the upper part of their houses. This, she added, was the fourteenth year, and an inundation was to be expected. The Spaniards, however, made light of her warning, considering it an old wife's fable, without reflecting that ancient inhabitants are generally the chronicles of local fact.

CHAPTER XXXI.

The Spaniards arrive at Aminoya—Quarrel between the Cacique Guachoya, and the Captain-General of Anilco—Singular challenge of the latter.

1542. HAVING fixed himself in one of the towns, De Añasco sent advice to the Governor of his success, and of the abundance around him. Moscoso immediately set off with the remainder of the army to join him. Notwithstanding their prospect of speedy repose and good quarters, this was as hard a march as any the troops had yet experienced. Enfeebled by sickness and famine, they had to traverse several swamps, in a drenching storm of rain, accompanied with a bitter north wind.

The hearts of the poor way-worn Spaniards

leaped within them when they once more came in sight of the Mississippi, for they regarded it as the highway by which they were to escape out of this land of disaster. They entered the village of Aminoya as a haven of repose, and thanked God that they had at length reached a spot where they might rest a while from their toils. Indeed, had they not at this juncture found a seasonable supply, it is probable most of them would have perished under the extreme rigours and privations of the winter. As it was, many reached this place of rest but to die. The excitement of the march had stimulated them beyond their strength; when exertion was no longer necessary, they fell into a lethargy, and, in the course of a few days, above fifty expired.

Among those who had thus survived the toils and perils of the march, to perish in this place of refuge was, Andres de Vasconcellos, a Portuguese cavalier of noble blood, who had distinguished himself on various occasions in the course of this fatal enterprise.

No one, however, was more lamented by the army than the brave Nuño Tobar, a cavalier no less valiant and noble, than unfortunate. Having had the misfortune, at the outset of

the enterprise, to displease De Soto by the indulgence of a criminal passion, he had never been forgiven, although he had repaired his injury to the lady by marriage, and atoned to his commander by repeated acts of chivalrous bravery. On the contrary, he had ever been treated by De Soto with a rigour and disdain, from which his great services should have shielded him ; nor had he been restored to his military rank under that general's successor, Moscoso.

Seeing the favourable situation of the village of Aminoya, and the fruitfulness of the surrounding country, the Governor resolved to establish his winter quarters, and build his brigantines here*. It is true, it was about sixteen leagues above the residence of Guachoya, where he had intended to winter, but that was immaterial ; the grand object was attained, a secure place on the Mississippi for the construction of vessels, for his proposed embarkation. In order to render his position more comfortable and secure, he destroyed one of the two adjacent villages, and carried all its pro-

* Mr. M'Culloch supposes the village of Aminoya to have been situated in the neighbourhood of the present town of Helena, about thirty miles above the Arkansa.

visions, wood and other necessaries to the other. This being surrounded by pallisades, he set about strengthening its defences, but such was the debilitated state of his men, that it cost him twenty days to accomplish the work. Being now, however, in good quarters, with plenty of food, and suffering no molestation from the natives, they soon began to recover from their fatigues and maladies, and with the renovation of their strength, their spirits likewise revived.

They now set to work to construct seven brigantines for the embarkation of all their forces. These were built under the superintendence of Francisco the Genoese, the same who on various occasions had been so proficient in constructing bridges, rafts and boats, being the only person in the army who knew any thing of ship-building. He was assisted by four or five carpenters of Biscay. Another Genoese and a Catalonian, skilled as their countrymen usually are in nautical affairs, engaged to caulk the vessels.

A Portuguese who having been a slave among the Moors of Fez had learned the use of the saw, instructed some of the soldiers in the art. He undertook to reduce the timber felled

in the neighbouring forests into suitable planks; while a cooper who was almost at death's door promised, as soon as he should be able to work, to make water-casks for the vessels.

Every bit of iron was now collected in order to be converted into articles necessary for the construction of the vessels. Their chains were knocked off the Indian captives; even the troopers' iron stirrups were given up and wooden ones substituted. A forge was erected to work up these materials into the necessary forms, and thus the whole undertaking soon began to wear an encouraging aspect.

Assistance was also rendered from other quarters. Guachoya, the old friend and ally of the Spaniards, hearing of their return, came with presents of provisions and renewed his former intercourse. The Cacique Anilco also, taught by the severe treatment he had brought upon himself by former hostility, now sent his Captain-General with a numerous retinue entreating the Governor's friendship and pleading ill-health as an excuse for not coming in person. The Captain-General was received with great ceremony and respect; he was shrewd and intelligent, and acquitted himself with great

address in his intercourse with the Spaniards. He mingled among them familiarly, acquainted himself with their plans and wishes, and transmitted an account of every thing to his Cacique, who immediately contributed all the assistance in his power. Every day or two came supplies from Anilco of fish and other provisions, together with different materials for the ships, such as cordage of various sizes made of grass and fibrous plants, and mantles woven from an herb resembling mallows, containing a fibre like flax which the Indians wrought into thread and dyed of many colours.

Guachoya emulated Anilco in supplying the wants of the Spaniards, but fell short of him in assiduity. Both Caciques furnished numbers of their subjects to serve in the camp and to do the rough work of the ships.

In order to carry on their ship-building without interruption from storms and inundations, the Spaniards erected four large buildings. Within these both officers and men toiled without distinction, sawing planks, twisting cordage, making oars, and hammering out iron. The only pride shown was in striving who should do the most work.

The cordage furnished by Anilco was made

into rigging and cables, and when this was not sufficient, the rinds of mulberry trees were substituted. The Indian mantles when sound and entire were formed into sails, the old ones being picked into shreds to caulk the vessels. For this latter purpose also use was made of an herb resembling hemp, called Enequen; and in place of tar, the seams were payed with the rosin and gum of various trees and with an unctuous kind of earth.

During the whole winter, the Captain-General of Anilco was continually with the Spaniards, officiating as the representative of his Cacique, mingling in all their concerns, administering to their wants, and seemingly taking as much interest in their plans as if they had been his own. His important services and the hearty good will with which they were rendered, made him so popular with both officers and soldiers, that he received on all occasions the same honours as would have been paid to his Cacique.

All this awakened the jealousy and anger of Guachoya. He had secretly sought to revive former hostilities between the Spaniards and Anilco, but his intrigues had been baffled. His spleen at length broke forth in presence of

the Governor and his officers on some new honours being paid to the Captain-General, whom he represented as a mere servant and vassal, base in origin, poor in circumstances, and remonstrated with the Spaniards for paying more respect to a man of such mean condition than to a powerful chieftain.

The General of Anilco listened with a calm, unchanging countenance until Guachoya had finished; then asking permission of Moscoso, he replied with generous warmth, showing his honourable descent from the same ancestors as his Cacique, and his high standing, being second only to his chieftain and commander of his forces. He reminded Guachoya of victories which he had gained over his father, himself, and his brothers, all of whom he had at different times had in his power and treated magnanimously; finally, as a mortal trial of prowess, he challenged Guachoya to enter alone into a canoe, that he would enter into another, and then each should launch his boat into the Mississippi. The abode of Guachoya lay several leagues down the river, that of the General of Anilco as far up the tributary stream which entered into the Mississippi. The challenger proposed

that he who should survive the mortal struggle of the voyage and navigate his canoe to his home should be declared victor.

The Captain-General of Anilco concluded his indignant speech, but Guachoya neither accepted the challenge nor answered a word, but remained with confused and downcast countenance. From that time forward Anilco's General was held in higher estimation than ever by the Spanish army.*

* Garcilaso de la Vega, Lib. 5, p. 2, c. 10

CHAPTER XXXII.

The league of the Caciques against the Spaniards—Gonzalo Silvestre roughly handles an Indian—How the designs of the hostile Caciques were frustrated.

1543. WHILE the Spaniards were diligently employed in building their brigantines, the natives of the surrounding provinces were plotting their destruction. On the opposite side of the Mississippi, a few leagues below Aminoya, extended the vast, fruitful, and populous province of Quigualtanqui;—the same which had been visited by a scouting party dispatched by the late Hernando De Soto during his halt at Guachoya; on which occasion the reader may recollect several taunting messages were sent by the Cacique to the Governor. The Cacique of Quigualtanqui was young and warlike; beloved

throughout his extensive dominions and feared by his neighbours on account of his great power.

Retaining his former enmity to the Spaniards, he learnt with alarm that they were again in his neighbourhood and building large barks, which might give them the command of the river, or enable them to quit the country and return in greater force to conquer it. He consequently, sent envoys to the neighbouring Caciques on both sides of the river, and a league was formed to combine their forces at a certain time for a general assault upon the Spaniards.

The Cacique of Anilco was invited to enter into the league, but he remained true to his christian allies, and sent the Governor secret intelligence of the conspiracy. Moscoso immediately ordered additional guards to be stationed about the camp, patrols to be kept up night and day, and vigilant watch maintained over those places where the arms and ammunition were deposited. Envoys arrived at all hours of the day and night from the Cacique of Quigualtanqui and his allies, bearing offers of friendship and various presents. The Governor perceived by their roving about the camp, and

taking note of every thing, that they were mere spies, he therefore gave orders, that no Indian should be admitted into the village by night ; these orders, however, were disregarded.

One night, Gonzalo Silvestre, with a comrade, was on duty at one of the gates. He was just recovering from severe illness, and still feeble. About mid-watch, in the clear moonlight, he saw two Indians approaching, with bows and arrows in their hands, and lofty plumes upon their heads. They advanced towards the gate across a fallen tree, which served as a bridge over the fosse. Silvestre, who knew the Governor's orders and the lurking treachery which surrounded them, felt his blood boil at sight of these intruders. "Here are two savages," said he to his comrade ; "how dare they come at night, in defiance of the Governor's prohibition. By the mass, the first that enters this gate shall feel the edge of my sword."

His comrade begged him to leave the Indian to him, as he was strong and well, and Silvestre but feeble. "By no means," replied the other, "I am strong enough to give these impudent savages a lesson."

The Indians drew nigh, and finding the gate

open, entered without hesitation. In an instant, Silvestre gave the foremost a blow in the face with his sword, and felled him to the earth. The savage recovered himself, snatched up his bow and arrows, and plunging into the fosse, swam to the other side. His companion sprang over the fallen tree, and leaping into his canoe, made the best of his way across the Mississippi.

At sunrise, four native warriors appeared in the camp, complaining in the name of all the neighbouring Caciques of this violation of the peace existing between them, and demanding that as the wounded Indian was a warrior of rank, the soldier who struck him should be put to death. A similar embassy was repeated at noon, and in the evening a third announcing that the warrior had died of his wound.

Luis de Moscoso gave evasive and haughty replies to the ambassadors, which greatly incensed the chieftains of the league. They concealed their rage, however, consoling themselves with the idea that the day of vengeance was at hand. In the mean time, each Cacique assembled his warriors, and prepared for a signal blow. Their plan was to burst suddenly upon the Spaniards, and massacre

every one of them. Should they fail in this, they proposed setting fire to the hulks of the vessels, and thus preventing their departure. They might then, as they imagined, exterminate their foes by degrees; for they were aware of their diminished numbers, and that but few horses, the chief objects of their terror, survived:—above all, they knew that the brave Hernando de Soto was no more.

The Spaniards were aware that the momentous day was at hand: for some of the spies who visited the camp had comforted the captives with assurances of speedy deliverance and revenge;—all which the native women had revealed to their masters. Added to this, as the nights were still and serene, they could hear the murmuring sound of Indian gatherings on both sides of the river, and see the camp-fires gleaming in different directions.

When this storm of war was about to burst upon the Spaniards, there came on a sudden rising of the waters. The prediction of the old Indian woman was verified. Although there had been no rain for several weeks, yet the Mississippi, in the month of March, swelled above its banks, and inundated the country for several leagues. The green fields and forests

were transformed into a broad sea,— the branches and tops of the trees rising above the surface, and canoes gliding between them in every direction. The town in which the Spanish army was quartered, stood on a rising ground, yet the water rose to the lower stories of the houses, and obliged the troops to take refuge in the garrets, or on sheds erected on strong piles. They had to quarter their horses in the same manner; and for some time it was impossible to go abroad, except in canoes, or on horseback, when the water reached the rider's stirrups. It was in consequence of these inundations, says the Spanish historian, that the Indians built their villages on high hills, or artificial mounds. The houses of the chieftains were often erected upon piles, with upper floors, where they might take refuge from the freshets.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

The Caciques of the League again prepare to attack the Spaniards—An Indian spy—A plot detected—Final preparations of Moscoso and his followers.

1543. THE swelling of the Mississippi and inundation of the surrounding country, dispersed the hordes of savages, and forced them to take refuge in their villages. The Caciques, however, did not abandon their design, but maintained an appearance of friendship, sending repeated messages and presents. Moscoso, ordered a vigilant watch to be kept about the village, and especially over the brigantines, permitting no Indians to approach them in their canoes, through fear of some treacherous intention.

The swoollen river subsided as slowly as it had risen, and it was two months before it shrank within its natural channel. As soon as

the surface of the country was sufficiently dry, the Caciques again collected their forces for the premeditated attack.

Anilco's General gave the Governor warning of their movements, and offered to bring a large force of Indians to assist him; but Moscoso declined his offer, lest the services of this generous chief should embroil him with his neighbours, after the Spaniards' departure.

Anxious to procure particular information of the conspirators' plans, Moscoso ordered a native, who was loitering about the town, and whom he suspected to be a spy, to be put to the rack. This is always a sure mode of forcing round assertions, whether true or false. The savage, under torture, declared that twenty Caciques of the neighbourhood were about to attack the camp with a large army:—that, to put the Governor off his guard and conceal their own treachery, they were to send a present of fish three days before the attack, and another on the appointed day; that the Indians who brought the fish, having first joined such of their countrymen as served in the camp, were to seize upon all weapons at hand, and set fire to the houses;—at the sight of the flames, the Caciques, with their troops,

were to rush from the places where they lay in ambush, and in the height of their confusion, assail the Spaniards on all sides.

The Governor, having heard this story, ordered the Indian to be kept in chains. On the day mentioned, thirty natives came into the town, bearing presents of fish and messages of kindness. The Governor immediately ordered them to be seized, taken aside separately, and examined concerning the conspiracy. They attempted no defence, but made a full confession of the plot. Moscoso, with his usual rigour, ordered forthwith that their right hands should be cut off, and that thus mutilated, they should be sent back to their Caciques, to give them warning that their treachery was discovered. The stoical savages bore this dreadful punishment without flinching; scarcely was the hand of one stricken off, when another laid his arm upon the block. Their patience and firmness extorted the pity and admiration even of their enemies.

This sanguinary punishment of their envoys put an end to the league of the Caciques, who gave up their plan of attacking the camp, and returned, each to his province, but with hearts bent on further hostility.

Guachoya had more than once been suspected by the Spaniards of secret participation in this plot, and had even been charged with it by the Indian spy, when under torture. There does not, however, appear to have been any proof of this ; and, indeed, all these stories of plots and conspiracies related by Indians of each other, are to be received with great distrust. The Spaniards, doubtless, were often deceived by their allies, who sought through their means to cripple their rivals ; and they brought upon themselves much needless hostility by their harsh measures to punish or prevent imputed treason.

Moscoso and his officers, convinced of their perilous situation, thus surrounded by open and secret foes, applied themselves assiduously to complete their armament, and provide stores for the voyage. Guachoya, conscious of the late suspicions entertained of him, redoubled his zeal in furnishing maize, fish, and other supplies, and Anilco continued his friendly offices to the last. Throughout all their wanderings, the Spaniards had preserved a number of the swine which they had brought with them to stock their intended settlement. These had, in fact, multiplied during the march, and

others which had strayed or been given to the Indians, had likewise produced their increase. The Spaniards now killed those that remained, except a dozen and half which they retained alive, in case they should yet form a settlement near the sea coast, and a few which they presented to Anilco and Guachoya. The carcasses were then cut up and made into bacon for ships' provisions. Of fifty horses that remained, they determined that twenty of the least valuable should be killed for food. This was a painful alternative, on account of their long companionship in danger, and the faithful services they had rendered. The poor animals were tied to stakes at night, a vein was opened, and they were thus left to bleed to death. Their flesh was then parboiled, dried in the sun, and laid up among the sea stores. Canoes were linked together, two and two, to convey the rest, their forefeet being placed in one canoe and their hind feet in another, and the canoes barricaded with boards and hides to ward off the arrows of their foes.

When the brigantines were ready for service, there was such an unusual swelling of the river, that the water reached the stocks, on which

they stood, so that they were launched with great ease. This was a fortunate circumstance, for being built of very thin planks, and fastened with short nails, they might have bulged in being transported overland. These vessels were merely large barks, open except at the bow and stern, where they had covered decks to protect the sea stores. Bulwarks of boards and hides extended along the gunwales, and planks were laid athwart them to serve as decks. Each had seven oars on either side, at which all the Spaniards, except the captains, were to take their turns indiscriminately. Every brigantine had two commanders, so that in emergencies one might act on land, while the other remained on board.

The little squadron being now afloat and all ready for embarkation, Moscoso made his final arrangements on shore. Two days before his departure he took a kind farewell of Guachoya, and the Captain-General of Anilco, sending them both back to their homes, first making them promise to live in friendship with each other after he was gone. Next day he dismissed the greater part of those Indians, male and female, who had been in the service of his camp, retaining such only, of either sex, as

belonged to distant tribes, and had followed the army in its wanderings. But not above thirty survived, out of a multitude which, from time to time, had been captured and reduced to servitude in the course of their extensive marchings. The rest had perished by degrees, under their various hardships. These survivors had, for the most part, become attached to the Spaniards, and moreover, dreaded being left among the strange tribes, who might enslave and maltreat them.*

* The Portuguese historian makes the number of Indians thus embarked amount to one hundred. The number given by the Inca is more probable, both narratives having previously stated that the greater part of those Indians who had followed the army in its last march perished before arriving at Aminoya.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Embarkation of the Spaniards upon the Mississippi—A grand concerted attack by a large fleet of canoes, and how the Spaniards fared—Gonzalo Silvestre sent on shore with a detachment of men for provisions—Loss of their horses.

1543. ON the second day of July, the Spaniards embarked on board their seven brigantines. The largest named the Capitana, was commanded by Luis de Moscoso, as admiral of this little fleet. Of that numerous and brilliant host which had entered upon this heroic but disastrous expedition for the conquest of Florida, not quite three hundred and fifty survived; and these were in a most wretched plight: their once brilliant armour was battered, broken, and rusted; their rich raiment reduced to rags, or replaced by skins of wild beasts.

The sun was setting as they got under weigh

and the gloom of evening seemed an emblem of their darkening fortunes. They were abandoning the fruit of all their labours and hardships,—the expected reward of their daring exploits,—the land of their golden dreams. They had launched on a vast and unknown river, leading they knew not whither, and were to traverse, in frail and rudely constructed barks, without chart or compass, great wastes of ocean, to which they were strangers, bordered by savage coasts, in the vague hope of reaching some Christian shore, on which they would land beggars!

With sail and oar they pursued their course all night, and on the following morning passed the residence of Guachoya. Here they found many inhabitants waiting in canoes to receive them, and beheld a rustic bower of branches prepared for their reception. The Governor, however, excused himself from landing, upon which the Indians accompanied him in their canoes to where the river diverged into two branches. Then warning him that he was near the residence of Quiguanqui, they offered to accompany him, and make war upon that Cacique; but Moscoso who desired nothing less than any hostile

encounter with the natives, declined their offer and dismissed them.

This little fleet continued its course by the main branch of the river in which there was a rapid current; and in the afternoon hauled to shore on the left bank, where the Spaniards passed the remainder of the day in a spacious wood. At night they again embarked, and continued their course. Next morning they landed near a village which had been abandoned, and took a woman prisoner, who informed them that the Cacique of Quigualtanqui had assembled all his forces further down the river, and was waiting to attack them.

This intelligence put them upon their guard, but made them ready to suspect hostilities, which perhaps were not intended. They had not proceeded much further down the stream, when, as they were foraging on shore, and supplying themselves with provisions, they perceived a number of canoes hovering on the opposite side, and, as they thought, menacing hostilities. The crossbow-men immediately leaped into the canoes that were astern of the brigantines, pushed across, and readily dispersed the savages.

No sooner, however, had the crossbow-

men returned to their brigantines, and the latter got under weigh, than the light barks of their enemies were again in sight. Keeping a-head of the squadron, and drawing up near a village that stood on a high bank, they seemed disposed to make battle. The canoes were again manned, the Indians once more dispersed, and the Spaniards landing, fired their village; after which, they encamped for the night in an open plain.

Whatever may have been the previous disposition and intentions of the Indians, they had now fair grounds for hostility; nor did they fail to exercise it to the utmost. On the following morning a powerful fleet of canoes was in sight, apparently the combined force of the hostile Caciques. Some of them were of great size, with from fourteen to twenty-five paddles on each side, and carrying from thirty to seventy warriors. They darted across the water with the swiftness of race horses.

Some of the principal warriors were brilliantly painted; so likewise were their canoes, both within and without. The paddles and rowers, even the warriors themselves, from the feet to the scalping-tuft, were severally painted of one colour. Some were blue, others yellow or white,

green, violet or black, according to the device or taste of the chieftain.

For that day, and part of the next, they followed the Spaniards without attacking them, keeping time in rowing by chanting wild songs of different cadences short or long, slow or fast, according to the speed with which they desired to move; closing each chant with a deafening yell, and shouting the name of Quigualtanqui. The burthen of these war-songs, was the chivalrous exploits of their ancestors, and the daring deeds of their chieftain, by recalling the memory of which, they roused themselves to battle. Proudly boasting of their own valour, at the same time taunting the Spaniards with cowardice in flying from their arms, they threatened to overthrow them, and make them food for fishes.

The second day at noon, there was a movement among the fleet of canoes. Separating into three different divisions, and forming a van, centre, and rear, they approached the right bank of the river. The canoes in the van darted forward, glided along to the right of the brigantines, and crossing the river obliquely, discharged a shower of arrows, which wounded many Spaniards, in spite of their shields and

bulwarks. They then wheeled round, and recrossing the stream in front of the brigantines, stationed themselves on the right bank. The second squadron, composing the centre of the fleet, performed the same manœuvre, and having discharged their arrows, returned and stationed themselves in front of the van. The rear did likewise, and then took up their position in front of all.

As the caravels advanced, the Indians repeated their attack, always returning to the right bank of the river. In this manner the savages fought with the Spaniards all day, never giving them a moment's rest, and interrupting their repose during the night by incessant alarms.

When the Spaniards were first attacked, they manned the canoes in which they had secured their horses, for the purpose of protecting them, as they expected to fight hand to hand with the savages. Perceiving, however, the enemy's intention to keep at a distance, and gall them with their arrows, and finding themselves exposed to these formidable missiles, they returned to the brigantines, leaving the horses with no other defence than the skins of animals, which they had thrown over them.

In these contests, the Spaniards had recourse

only to their crossbows, for their arquebusses had never been of use since the destruction of their gunpowder, at the conflagration of Mauvila, and they had been wrought with other articles into iron-work for the brigantines. They acted, however, only on the defensive, endeavouring merely to keep the enemy at bay, while the rowers plied their oars; sheltering themselves as well as they were able with buffalo skins, and shields made of double mats, through which an arrow could not penetrate.

This harassing warfare continued for several days and nights, until most of the Spaniards were wounded, and all were worn out with fatigue and watching, and the weight of their armour. Of the horses, only eight remained alive. The savages, at length, desisted from their attacks, and hovered at a distance.

Moscoso imagining they had given over all further hostilities, and supposing that the sea could not be far off, was desirous of procuring a fresh supply of provisions. Observing a small village on the banks of the river, he sent Gonzalo Silvestre on shore with a hundred men and the eight horses, to seek supplies. The inhabitants fled with loud yells

at the approach of such strange people and animals. Silvestre found abundance of maize and dried fruits, with various skins, and among the rest a martin skin, decorated with strings of pearls, which appeared to have been used as a banner. While he and his party were taking possession of every thing in their way, they heard the trumpet sounding their recall. Hurrying to the river bank, they beheld a fleet of canoes pulling towards them with all speed, while a band of Indians were running to cut them off by land. Springing into their canoes, they pulled with desperate exertions to the brigantines, abandoning the horses to their fate. The savages turned to vent their fury upon the latter. The gallant creatures defended themselves by kicking and plunging, and some of the Indians were so frightened at what they took for ferocious monsters that they leaped into the water; the rest, however, hunted the poor horses like so many deer, transfixing them with their arrows, and finally destroyed them.

Thus miserably perished the remnant of the three hundred and fifty noble steeds which had entered Florida in such gorgeous array. As the Spaniards beheld these faithful animals

slaughtered before their eyes, without being able to aid them, they shed tears as though the horses had been their own children*.

* Garcilaso de la Vega. L. 6. c. 5. Portuguese Relation, c. 38.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Continuation of the voyage down the Mississippi—The foolhardy exploit of Estevan Añez—The feat of Pedro Moron, the half-breed—Uncertain fate of De Guzman.

1543. THE Indians continued to follow at some distance in the rear of the Spaniards, attacking any of their vessels that lagged behind, until the sixteenth day of their harassing voyage.

On board one of the brigantines was a soldier named Estevan Añez. He was of low birth, but had joined the expedition as a trooper. His steed, though of sorry appearance, being tough and strong, was among the last that perished. Owing to his being mounted, Añez had been engaged in some of the most perilous services of the expedition, and though

he had never performed any thing of note, had gained the reputation of a gallant man, which added to his natural rusticity and narrow spirit, had rendered him weak and vain-glorious. This day he got into a canoe, attached to the stern of the brigantine, under pretence of speaking with Moscoso, but in reality on a hair-brained project. He induced to join him, five young cavaliers of buoyant spirits and daring valour, promising them some brilliant exploit. One of them, Carlos Enriquez, scarcely twenty years of age, graceful in form, and with a countenance of extreme beauty, was the natural son of Don Carlos Enriquez, who fell bravely fighting in the battle of Mauvila.

Estevan Añez, with these five gallant youths, pulled directly for the Indian fleet that stretched across the river in the rear. The Governor, witnessing this mad freak, ordered the trumpets to sound a recall. The captains of the brigantines likewise shouted and made signs for them to return. The louder they shouted, the more obstinate and vain-glorious Estevan Añez became and instead of returning, he made signs for the brigantines to follow him. When Luis de Moscoso beheld the stubbornness of this madman, he despatched

forty-six Spaniards after him in three canoes, vowing to hang him the moment he should be brought back. Juan de Guzman, the commander of one of the brigantines, was the first to leap into a canoe, followed by his friend Juan de Vargas. Guzman prided himself upon his skill in managing a canoe, and resisted the entreaties of his friends that he would remain in the brigantine.

The savages perceiving the Spaniards' approach, made a retrograde movement for the purpose of leading them away from the brigantines, which, having furled their sails, were pulling slowly against the current to support them. Estevan Añez, however, being blinded by his vanity, instead of mistrusting the enemy's designs, was deceived by this stratagem, and pulled with redoubled might towards them, crying, "They fly! they fly! at them! at them!" The other three canoes increased their efforts, likewise hoping either to detain him or give him succour.

The Indians having allowed their foes to draw nigh, altered the disposition of their forces, the centre retreating, so as to form a half moon, and thus luring the Christians into the midst of them. They then assailed them

furiously in front and flank. Some leaped into the water and overturned the canoes of the Spaniards, many of whom were carried down by the weight of their armour and drowned. Some who kept themselves up by swimming were shot with arrows, or struck over the head with paddles, and others who clung to the overturned canoes were beaten off. In this manner, without being able to make the least defence, forty-eight Spaniards miserably perished. Four alone escaped. One was Pedro Moron, the half-breed, who was an expert swimmer, and exceedingly skilful in the management of a canoe; he had fallen into the river, but with great dexterity and strength, recovered his bark and made his escape, bearing off with him three other soldiers. One of them, named Alvaro Nieto, fought alone, and kept the savages at bay, whilst Pedro Moron guided the canoe; but neither the prowess and valour of the one, nor the dexterity and skill of the other would have availed, had not the brigantine of Juan de Guzman fortunately been near. This bark was in advance of the rest, the crew having made greater exertion, aware that their much-loved leader was in the midst of the affray; thus they rescued four of

their comrades. Another Spaniard, Juan Teron, reached the brigantine, but as his companions were raising him out of the water, he breathed his last in their arms, being pierced with more than fifty arrows. The survivors asserted, that they had seen the gallant De Guzman borne off by the Indians in one of their canoes, but whether dead or alive, they could not tell.

Luis de Moscoso once again arranged his fleet in order, and resumed his eventful voyage, deeply lamenting the loss of these generous and valiant cavaliers.

This was the last assault of the savages, who seemed satisfied with this signal blow. All the rest of the day, and during the succeeding night, they kept up continual shouts of triumph. When the sun rose on the following morning they appeared to worship him and to return thanks for their victory, then raising a deafening din of voices, mingled with the sound of trumpets, shells and drums, they turned their prows up the river and departed for their homes.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

The Spaniards reach the Ocean—Disembark on an island of drift-wood—Fierce encounter with the natives of the Coast—They anchor off an uninhabited island.

1543. THE harassed Spaniards began once more to breathe freely, when they saw their cruel enemies depart. They now reflected seriously upon their position. The river had expanded until it was several leagues in breadth; thus, when in the midst, they could not descry land on either side. The departure of the Indians led them to conjecture that the sea was near at hand. Keeping the

centre of the current, therefore, lest they should wander into some deep bay, they continued onward, with sail and oar and favouring breeze, until on the twentieth day, a broad expanse of water opened before them. On their left lay a large island, formed by vast quantities of drift-wood swept down the river, and piled up by the repercussion of the waters from the sea. About a league further was an uninhabited island, such as is often found at the mouths of great rivers, formed by alluvial deposits. The Spaniards were convinced by these signs, that they had reached the mouth of the Mississippi, and that the boundless ocean lay before them.

They now steered for the island of drift-wood, and found a secure harbour for their brigantines; for they could lay them beside the floating masses of timber, which rose and fell with the tide, and, fastening them to trunks of huge trees imbedded there, leave them as secure as if at a pier head. Here, they landed, and overhauled their vessels, to repair any damage they might have sustained, and fit them for the buffetings of the ocean, killed the few hogs that yet remained alive, and converted them into bacon.

These labours, however, required but little time; the great object in landing was repose. So exhausted were they from the constant watchfulness they had been obliged to maintain for three weeks past, that during two days they did little else than sleep; and that so profoundly, that they lay about like so many dead bodies.

About noon on the third day, they were roused from their repose by the appearance of enemies. Seven canoes issued from among reeds and rushes, and approaching within hail, a gigantic Indian, black as an Ethiopian, either from paint or natural complexion, stood up in the prow of the foremost, and addressed them in a thundering voice. After a brief harangue, accompanied by menacing looks and gestures, he turned his prow, and followed by his companions, shot back again among the rushes, where, from time to time, other canoes were perceived gliding about as if in ambush.

The words of this black warrior being explained, for they were partially understood by the Indian domestics, they proved to be insulting epithets, and threats of hostility. Moscoso fearing his enemies might put their threats into execution, and attempt to surprise

him in the night, and burn his vessels, determined to be before-hand with them, and strike the first blow. He accordingly detached, in five canoes, a party of picked men to beat up the cane-brake. Among these were twenty-two crossbow-men and three archers. One of the archers was an Englishman by birth; another had lived in England from his boyhood until his twenty-eighth year, and had acquired there his skill with the long-bow and the cloth-yard arrow, for which the English were renowned. Throughout the expedition these two archers had used no other weapon, and had been noted for their deadly aim. The third archer was an Indian, servant of the gallant Juan de Guzman, who had fallen in the late battle, whom he had served faithfully on all occasions since his master's first landing in Florida.

This detachment was commanded by Gonzalo Silvestre and Alvaro Nieto. They discovered the enemy's canoes drawn up in battle array among the rushes, in formidable numbers. The savages waiting until their foes were within bow shot, and, having discharged a cloud of arrows that wounded several soldiers, swept in among the rushes, and came to

a. second stand. In this way, they shot and wheeled about, and came again to the charge like so many horsemen. The crossbow-men and the three archers kept up a well directed discharge, and galled the Indians excessively; at length the Spaniards were able to come to close quarters, overturned three of the canoes of the enemy, killed several of the crew, and put the whole armament to flight. They, however, came out of this affray very roughly handled; most of them being wounded, and among the number their two commanders.

Fearing an attack in the night, and that fire might be set to the vessels, Moscoso embarked all his forces and made sail for the uninhabited island, under the lea of which he anchored, in forty fathoms water. All that night the Spaniards slept on their arms, on board their vessels, ready for action: the enemy, however, offered no further molestation.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

A council of officers called to determine upon their future course—They set sail—Añasco prevails upon them to follow his advice.

1543. WHEN day dawned, the Governor called a council of his officers to determine what course they should steer. To attempt crossing to Cuba or Hispaniola was considered entirely out of the question, as they knew not where to seek these ports, nor were they provided with nautical instruments necessary for such a voyage: it was determined, therefore, to make for the coast of Mexico, or New Spain: in steering towards which, they would have the land always on their right, whither they might resort as occasion should require.

Juan de Añasco now stood forth with his usual bustling zeal, whenever any important measure was to be adopted. He piqued himself much upon his knowledge of maritime affairs, as he did upon various other kinds of knowledge, and declared that, according to maps which he had seen, from the place where he supposed they then were, the coast bore east and west to the river of Palms, and from that river to New Spain ran north and south, making a considerable curvature. He advised, therefore, that they should put out to sea in a south-west direction, so as to steer across the gulf; by this route they might reach the Mexican shores in ten or twelve days, whereas, if they kept near the land, and followed the windings of the coast, the voyage would necessarily be prolonged, and they might be overtaken by winter before they could arrive at a Christian country. To illustrate his ideas, he drew upon a piece of parchment, made from a deer's skin, a rough chart, according to his notions of the coast; he also produced an old astrolabe, which, being of metal, had escaped the conflagration at Mauvila, and which he had preserved with curious care; likewise a forestaff, which he had made from a

carpenter's rule. With these to take observations and to steer by, he offered to pilot the squadron across the gulf to the shores of New Spain.

The Governor was at first inclined to adopt this council, especially as it was concurred in by some of the officers. The majority, however, opposed it; partly through doubts of the nautical knowledge of Juan de Añasco, who they knew had but little practical experience; partly perhaps, from jealousy of the lead so often given to him in services of moment, but chiefly because of the real dangers of his proposition. They argued that the brigantines, being so slightly built, and without decks, would be in danger of foundering in the least storm;—that their peril would be almost equally great on the high sea, in calms or head-winds from want of fresh water, having so few casks to put in, and that it would be the height of rashness to attempt to cross a vast and unknown gulf without a compass to steer by, and an experienced pilot to direct them. They concluded, therefore, that though it might be the slower, it would be the far surer course to keep along the coast, where they could land occasionally for supplies, and take refuge in

creeks, bays, and mouths of rivers, in case of tempestuous weather. This council finally prevailed, much to the vexation of Juan de Añasco.

Orders were now given to make sail, when, as they were weighing anchor, the cable of the Governor's brigantine parted. Unfortunately, there was no buoy to mark the place, and the water was extremely deep. For six hours the most expert divers were employed to search for it, but in vain; they therefore supplied its place with a heavy stone, and bits from the troopers' bridles to increase its weight.

It was not until three o'clock in the afternoon that they made sail. The Governor and Añasco took the lead. They kept on for two or three leagues into the broad sea, when the captains of the other vessels bore up, and hailing Moscoso, demanded whether he intended to quit the shore, contrary to the resolution of the council, declaring that if he did they would abandon him, and take each his own course.

Moscoso replied that he stood to sea for the purpose of sailing with more security during the night, but that he should return to the coast in the day time. All that night, and the next day, this little fleet kept on with a fair wind, and to their

surprise, in fresh water, owing to the immense quantity disembogued by the Mississippi. About nightfall, they anchored at a small rocky island, to take a little repose.

Here Juan de Añasco again produced his deer-skin chart, and inveighed against the loss of time and labour in thus creeping pusillanimously along shore, instead of standing boldly across the gulf. His arguments at length prevailed, and, on the following morning, all the vessels stood out to sea. For two days Juan de Añasco piloted them triumphantly with the aid of his astrolabe and forestaff, and frequent consultations of the deer-skin chart. At length their water growing scanty, they felt inclined to stand toward the shore, but were met in the teeth by a contrary wind.

This wind continued two days, and kept them beating about on the high seas until their water was nearly expended. They now bitterly inveighed against Juan de Añasco for giving his advice, and the Governor for following it, and swore that if they once more got in with the land, they would keep along shore, let Moscoso and his nautical counsellor take what course they pleased. On the fourth day, when they were at their last drop of water, the wind

veered a little, and, plying every oar, they made for the coast. Those on board the vessels, who knew any thing of nautical matters, now vented their spleen upon Juan de Añasco as a meddling pretender, who had never been at sea before this expedition, and knew nothing of maritime affairs. The common soldiers made merry at the expense of his astrolabe and deer-skin chart. This coming to Añasco's ears, he flung his forestaff into the sea, with the chart tied to it, and would have sent the astrolabe after them, but prudence tempered his wrath. Fortunately, the forestaff and chart floated, and were picked up by the brigantines which followed, and Juan de Añasco was gradually pacified. He seems in fact, to have been the only person in the squadron who had a just notion of their situation and true course, and his idea of the run of the coast was in the main correct.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Vessels in danger of stranding—Come to some small Islands, where they repair the brigantines—Overtaken by a violent gale, and two caravels driven to sea—Mutiny of Juan Gaytan's crew.

1543. IT was with much toil and difficulty that the Spaniards rowed to shore, where they landed on a sandy beach without shelter. In the evening the wind blew fresh from the south, and drove the vessels from their weak anchors, so that they were in danger of stranding. The crews were obliged to leap into the water, and bear up against them to keep them from bilging. When the wind had subsided they dug pits in the sand, from which they procured fresh water enough to fill their casks. In this way they supplied themselves with water throughout the voyage, whenever there

were no springs or streams at hand. After sailing about fifteen days, they came to four or five small islands, not far from the main land. Here they found innumerable quantities of sea birds, which built their nests upon the sand, and so close together, that it was almost impossible to walk without treading upon them. The men landed and returned to the vessels, laden with eggs and young birds, which were almost too fat to eat. Quitting these islands, they coasted along until they came to a beautiful beach, free from rushes, skirted by a grove of large trees, clear of bush, brake or underwood. Here they found great quantities of that scum of the sea called copeck, resembling pitch. They therefore remained here several days, careening their brigantines on the beach, caulking their seams, and smearing them with the copeck, mixed with hog's lard. While thus employed they were visited several times by a few natives, armed with bows and arrows, but pacific in their conduct, who brought maize in exchange for skins. Continuing their voyage, the Spaniards were exceedingly molested in some parts of the coast by clouds of mosquitoes, so virulent in their sting, that the men's faces were swollen

out of all shape. It thus became necessary to stand by the rowers, and drive off these pestilent insects from their heads as they laboured at the oar.

When the weather was pleasant some of the men fished while others went on shore and gathered shell-fish, for they were on short allowance, their pork being expended, and they had but little maize remaining. Some of the fish taken were of a very large size, and one jerked with such violence as to pull the unwary fisherman into the water.

For fifty-three days the Spaniards kept along the coast steering to the westward. A great part of the time, however, was employed in repairing the vessels, in fishing, and in sheltering themselves from rough weather. Juan de Añasco, calculating the distance they had come, insisted that they must be near the river of Palms, from which, as he had before represented, according to his recollections of the map he had seen, the coast bore north and south. The fleet consequently stood a little out to sea, and next morning early they perceived palm trees at a distance rising above the surface of the water, and observed that the coast actually lay north and south. In the afternoon high

mountains began to loom up afar off,—the first they had seen on any part of the sea coast since their first landing at Espiritu Santo. The opinions of Juan de Añasco now rose in the estimation of his companions, and it was concluded that they had passed the river of Palms in the night time. If so, they could not be above sixty leagues from the river of Panuco in the neighbourhood of Spanish settlements.

They had not proceeded far, however, when a violent gale sprang up from the north. Five of the brigantines, and among them that of the Governor, made for the land, the other two caravels, one under command of the treasurer, Juan Gaytan, who since the untimely death of De Guzman had been sole captain, and the other commanded by Juan Alvarado, and Christoval Mosquera, not taking timely warning of the threatening gale stood off too far from the coast, and were consequently exposed all night to its fury. The caravel of Juan Gaytan was at one time in imminent peril. A sudden squall struck her, wrenched her mast out of the beam, and it was with the utmost difficulty they could right it again. When morning dawned, instead of lulling as the mari-

ners had predicted, the gale raged with renewed violence. Observing the other five brigantines enter a creek and anchor in safety, it stimulated the crews of the two caravels to redouble their efforts to reach their companions. All their efforts were however vain, for the wind was directly a-head, and they were several times in danger of foundering in spite of their struggles. They still persisted until the afternoon, when convinced that further toil would be unavailing, they bore off and ran along the coast with the wind on their quarter, the billows all the while breaking over them so that they were in continual danger of being swamped.

For six and twenty hours the gale continued with unabated fury during which time the Spaniards were struggling with the winds and waves without a moment's repose and scarcely tasting food. Just as the sun was going down there was a cry of "land a-head." A boy named Francisco, in the brigantine under the command of Juan de Alvarado, and Francisco Mosquera, said to those captains, "Señores, I know this coast, as I have visited it twice before as cabin-boy of a ship; the dark land stretching to the left is a

rough and rock-bound shore extending to the harbour of Vera Cruz. In all that distance there is neither port nor shelter, but it is studded with sharp-pointed rocks; if we strike upon these we must all perish. The light coloured land to the right is a soft sand-beach which we can attain before nightfall. Should the wind drive us upon those gloomy shores we have little chance of our lives!"

So soon as the vessels drew near each other, the two captains warned Juan Gaytan and his crew of their danger. The latter immediately determined to shape their course for the white shore, but Juan Gaytan, who was a better treasurer than captain, opposed this measure, saying it was not well thus to lose a valuable bark. This exasperated the crew who began to mutiny and murmur, "Is this vessel of more worth than our lives?" said they, "You presume upon your rank of royal treasurer. Did you cut wood, or make charcoal for the forges, or beat out iron for the nails, or caulk the vessels, or in fact do any thing? No! you excused yourself as an officer of the Emperor; pray, then what do you lose if the brigantine is wrecked?"

Not heeding their commander the principal soldiers set to work trimming the sails, and a

Portuguese named Domingos de Acosta seized the helm and turned the prow of the bark towards the desired shore. After making several tacks, they struck upon the beach before the sun had set, and succeeded in unloading and hauling the vessel on dry land. The other brigantine effected a landing in a similar manner, and with like success.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Expedition of Gonzalo Silvestre to obtain information about the country—What happened to Moscoso and the rest of the fleet—How the Spaniards were received by the inhabitants of Panuco.

1543. THE crews of the two barks now assembled together to decide what should be done. It was unanimously resolved to send messengers to seek the Governor with tidings of their situation. But who would undertake this perilous journey? They would have to travel thirteen or fourteen leagues through an unknown land, to ford rivers, and peradventure encounter enemies.

Gonzalo Quadrado Xaramillo and Francisco Muñoz undertook the task. Taking a small

supply of provisions, and buckling on their shields and swords they set forth at midnight on their hazardous expedition.

Their comrades then returned to their brigantines, posted sentries, and took a refreshing repose after their arduous labours. The morning had no sooner dawned than they chose three captains to set out, each with twenty men, and explore the country. One party followed the coast to the north, another to the south, and the third, under Gonzalo Silvestre, took a westwardly direction into the interior.

The two first parties returned in a short time, one bringing half a dish of white porcelain, of Spanish manufacture, the other a broken porringer of painted earthenware. The rapture of their comrades at beholding these signs of the neighbourhood of some Spanish settlement, is easier to be conceived than described.

Gonzalo Silvestre and his band had penetrated little more than quarter of a league, when they beheld a beautiful lake of fresh water spread out before them, half a league in extent. Upon its waters were several canoes with Indians fishing. Fearing that these might see them, and spread an alarm, they struck into a wood that bordered

the lake, and keeping silently on for a quarter of a league, they saw two Indians beneath a Guava tree, gathering the fruit. Dragging themselves along the ground among the herbage until sufficiently near, they rose at the same time, and rushed to seize the Indians, one of whom plunged into the lake, and escaped by swimming; they took the other prisoner; at the same time making prize of two baskets of Guavas, a Mexican turkey, two Spanish fowls, and some maize;—they then proceeded with all haste towards the vessels.

On arriving at the sea-shore, they found their comrades examining those tokens of civilization discovered by the two Captains. When, however, the Spaniards beheld the articles brought by Silvestre and his party, they leaped about like madmen. A surgeon, who had formerly been in Mexico, asking the Indian captive the name of a pair of scissors, which he held in his hand, the latter immediately called it by its Spanish name. This convinced them that they were in the territory of Mexico, which elated them to such a degree, that they embraced Silvestre and his men, and hoisting that Captain upon their shoulders, bore him about the shore in triumph.

When this ebullition of joy had subsided, upon inquiring more particularly respecting the country, they learnt that the river into which Luis de Moscoso, with the five brigantines, had taken refuge, was the Panuco; and that on its banks, twelve leagues above, stood a city of the same name. The Indian told them, moreover that about a league off, lived a Cacique, who could read and write, and had been educated by Christian priests.

These joyful tidings gladdened their hearts, and having feasted the Indian, and given him presents, they despatched him to the Christian Cacique, with a request that the latter would either bring or send a supply of ink and paper. Their messenger soon returned, and with him the Cacique, followed by a train of eight Indians, laden with fowls, bread of maize, and various fruits and fish, together with paper and ink. The Spaniards immediately sent off a native with a letter to Moscoso, giving him an account of all that had happened, and requesting directions as to their future movements.

Meanwhile, Moscoso, when he took refuge in the river from the gale, with his five brigantines, to his great joy beheld several Indians on shore, clothed in the Spanish costume. Addressing them

in Spanish, he demanded in what country they then were. The Indians answered in the same language, that they were on the Panuco river, and that the town of that name was not fifteen leagues distant. Upon this the Spaniards leaped on shore, kissed the ground repeatedly, and throwing themselves on their knees, poured out their thanks to God.

They now made the best of their way to the town of Panuco, where, in a few days, they were joined by their shipwrecked comrades. On entering the town their first act was to repair to the church, and offer up thanks to God for having preserved them through so many perils and hardships. The burghers crowded to the church to offer them assistance. The Corregidor took Moscoso into his house, made him his guest, and quartered his followers among the inhabitants.

The town was for the most part built of stone, and contained about seventy families, who lived simply but abundantly, the wealthiest not possessing incomes of above five hundred crowns. Many of the inhabitants, however, were courteous cavaliers, and all were touched with pity at beholding this forlorn

remnant of the gallant armament, which had excited such expectations on its outset from Cuba.

The survivors in fact, were blackened, haggard, shrivelled, and half naked ; being clad only with the skins of deer, buffaloes, bears, and other animals, so that, says the Spanish historian, they looked more like wild beasts than human beings.

CHAPTER XL.

Discontents and broils among the soldiery—Their subsequent fortunes.

1543. THE Chief Magistrate of Panuco despatched a messenger forthwith to Don Antonio de Mendoza, of Mexico, which city lay seventy leagues distant, to apprise him that a small remnant of Hernando de Soto's army had returned from Florida. The Viceroy sent word, without delay, that they should be shown every kindness, and furnished with whatever was necessary for their journey when sufficiently recovered from their fatigues. He accompanied his message with a supply of shirts and sandals, and also four mules laden with delicacies and medicines for the sick.

While Luis de Moscoso and his men continued in this city, they had time to reflect upon

the beautiful country they had abandoned, and began to draw comparisons between it and Panuco. They found that here the people were but indifferently circumstanced, having neither mines of gold nor of silver, nor any other treasure. Their dresses were mere garments of cotton; their only source of wealth the breeding of horses, and planting of mulberry trees. The adventurers now began to retrace in memory the beautiful provinces they had discovered; their wild fertility and prodigal abundance; their capabilities for raising maize, grain and vegetables; their verdant meadows and rich pastures; their vast tracts of woodland, watered by running streams, so well adapted to the raising of flocks and herds. But above all, they called to mind the treasures of pearls, which they had not appreciated, as each adventurer fancied himself lord of boundless domains.

Turning over these things in their minds, they began to murmur among themselves. "Could we not," said they, "have dwelt in Florida, as these Spaniards live in Panuco? and had we settled there, should we not have been more opulent than our hosts here? Is it just that we should come and receive hospitality from others poorer than

ourselves, when we might have entertained all Spain? Is it creditable to our honour that we, who might have been chieftains, have come here to beg? It would have been far better to have bravely perished in the beautiful country we have quitted, amid the struggles of war and the labours of discovery, than to dwell here in inglorious inaction!"

These murmurings in their poverty, produced violent discord among the discontented soldiers. Their greatest rage, however, was against the officers of the royal revenue, and those who, after the death of the Governor, Hernando de Soto, had insisted upon quitting Florida, and had obstinately forced Luis de Moscoso to undertake that disastrous journey to the province of Los Vasqueros, instead of sending two brigantines for reinforcements, as had been intended. Several affrays took place, in which blood was shed, and some lives lost. The officers and cavaliers were obliged to keep within doors, and the town was continually distracted by broils among the soldiery.

The Corregidor of Panuco, finding that this discord increased from day to day, sent word to the Viceroy, Don Antonio de Mendoza, who ordered Moscoso and his disappointed troops to be sent immediately to Mexico, in small detachments of ten and twenty, and that care

should be taken to separate those who were at variance, lest they should fight by the road.

In pursuance of this order, they left Panuco twenty-five days after their arrival there. The inhabitants along the road thronged to see them; eager to behold men who had survived such toils and endured such hardships. The fame of their great sufferings and daring exploits had spread throughout the land, and both Indians and Spaniards entertained them with great kindness during their journey. When they arrived at the renowned city of Mexico, throngs of citizens flocked out to receive them, and conducted them to their homes, where they feasted them and clothed them in sumptuous apparel. The Viceroy treated the Governor and his officers with distinguished attention, and extended his liberality to the humblest of their followers.

Some of the skins and furs which the army had preserved were highly prized in Mexico. A few strings of pearls, also, which they had brought with them, proved to be of immense value. The beautiful martin skins, however, were valued above all. Finding that men of wealth prized so highly what they had despised, their despondency increased; they

brooded bitterly over their folly in abandoning a country which had cost them so much to discover, and where such valuable articles abounded. Discontented with themselves, they forgot their former brotherhood in arms, and again broke out into sanguinary brawls.

In order to console them, the Viceroy, promised that, if they desired to return to Florida, he would himself undertake the conquest of that country; in fact, he had an inclination for the enterprise, and offered salaries to many of the officers and men, if they would accompany him. Some accepted his proposals but most of them, when put to the proof, shrank from returning to a country where they had suffered so many hardships.

The enterprising spirit of Juan de Añasco was somewhat broken by disappointment, and, disgusted with the new world, where he had squandered his fortune, he returned to Spain. Juan Gaytan, the treasurer, Baltazar de Gallegos, Pedro Calderon, Alonso Romo de Cardenos, Arias Tinoco, and many others of less note, followed the example of De Añasco. Gomez Suarez de Figuero returned to the estate of his father. Some embraced the priesthood: a few remained in New Spain,

among whom was the Governor, Luis de Moscoso de Alvarado, who married a relative, a woman of rank and wealth in Mexico. The greatest number, however, went to seek their fortunes in Peru.

CHAPTER XLI.

The voyages of Maldonado and Gomez Arias in search of De Soto—Death of Doña Isabel de Bobadilla.

1543. To close this eventful history, it only remains to give some account of the movements of Diego Maldonado and Gomez Arias. The former, as we have before related, set sail from Espiritu Santo, for the Havana, with two brigantines, to visit Doña Isabel de Bobadilla, wife of Hernando de Soto; Gomez Arias having preceded him in a caravel. These two cavaliers had received orders to procure vessels in Havana, load them with supplies of food, arms, and stores, and sail for the Port of Achusi in the course of the following autumn, where De Soto, after exploring the interior of Florida, was to meet them.

They accordingly joined each other in the

Havana, and, having sent to all the adjacent islands an account of the discovery of Florida, purchased three vessels and freighted them with supplies, together with the two brigantines and the caravel. They could have laden two additional vessels; for the inhabitants of the islands, hearing such a favourable report of Florida, and prompted by their own interest as well as by their love for De Soto, sent all the provision they could collect.

The two captains set sail and reached the Port of Achusi in safety, but not finding De Soto there, they separated and coasted in opposite directions, thinking it probable that he might have come out at some other place, either to the eastward or westward. They left signals in the trees and cut letters in the bark, with statements of their intended movements the following summer, but, after cruising about in vain until the winter set in, they returned dejected to the Havana. The following summer, they revisited the shores of Florida, running along the coast as far to the westward as Mexico, and a great distance to the eastward, but meeting with no success, they returned to the Havana on approach of

winter. Early the ensuing summer they again sailed for Florida, and after having consumed seven months in fruitless search, were compelled by the weather to return and winter in the harbour of Cuba.

Determined, however, not to give up the search until they had discovered traces of De Soto, for they could not believe that every soul of the expedition had perished; as soon as the spring of 1543 opened, they again put to sea. They cruised about all this summer, suffering grievous privations and undergoing excessive labour, and about the middle of October arrived at Vera Cruz. Here they heard the melancholy account that the Spaniards had abandoned Florida, that only three hundred of the gallant army had escaped, and that the Governor, Hernando de Soto, had perished in the country he sought to conquer. With these sad tidings, the two captains repaired to Havana, and communicated them to Doña Isabel de Bobadilla. During three long years she had been racked with anxiety for her husband's safety, and now came news of the failure of his magnificent enterprise, the loss of his treasures, the ruin of his estate, the downfall of his house, and his own melancholy death.

It was an overwhelming blow ; Doña Isabel never held up her head from this time, but died soon after of a broken heart.

Thus closes this history of blasted hope and baffled enterprise.

THE END.

A P P E N D I X .

As the principal authority in the foregoing work is Garcilaso de la Vega, a few particulars concerning him and his writings may be acceptable to the reader. He was a Peruvian by birth, a native of the city of Cuzco. His father was a Spanish adventurer of noble descent, and his mother the sister of Huayna Capac, the last of the renowned Incas. Hearing much in his youth of the land of his father, he quitted his country and repaired to Spain, where he took up his residence at Cordova, and soon distinguished himself by his translation of the Dialogues of Love of Leon Hebreos, and by his Royal Commentaries on the History of the Incas. These won him the favour of the Sovereigns and the esteem of the learned. Don Gabriel Deza de Cardenas, in his preface to the second edition of Garcilaso's History of Florida, remarks, that he was admired by the world as a man of piety, virtue, modesty and devotion to letters, and held in the highest estimation as a historian. He died in Cordova in 1616, and was honourably interred in the cathedral in one of the chapels called the Chapel of Garcilaso, where monumental inscriptions on each side of the altar record his valour, his virtues and his literary merits.

Such is the general character of Garcilaso de la Vega ; which will enable the reader in some measure to judge of his credibility as a historian. In his introduction to his work on Florida he gives an account of the sources whence he drew his facts. He says that he had frequently, and in divers places, held long conversations with an old friend who had been present in the expedition of Hernando de Soto, and that, struck with the achievements both of Spaniards and Indians related by this cavalier, he determined to rescue such heroic deeds from oblivion by recording them. His laudable resolve was for a time, however, postponed. He was called to lay down the pen and take up the sword: other causes concurred to separate them, and thus twenty years elapsed before he could carry his plan into execution.

The desire, however, of perpetuating this heroic expedition and the names of the brave men engaged in it, increased with his years, and fearing that the death either of his friend or of himself might defeat his wishes, he left his home and took up his residence for a time in the village where the cavalier resided. Here he took down the particulars of the expedition, as related by word of mouth, questioning his friend minutely and repeatedly as to persons, places and transactions ; thus stimulating his memory and drawing piece-meal from him those anecdotes of individual prowess and adventure, which give such stirring interest and vivacity to his narrative.

Garcilaso does not give the name of his friend, but says he was a brave soldier, who had been present in all the

scenes of the expedition and had many times acted as leader in the exploits related. He adds that he was of noble rank, a hidalgo, and as such piqued himself on uttering nothing but the truth. Such confidence was placed in his veracity that the Council Royal of the Indies frequently sent for him to consult him about the events that chanced in this and other expeditions in which he had been engaged.

Besides the oral testimony of this cavalier, the Inca informs us that he had likewise written documents from two soldiers who were engaged in the expedition. One of them, named Alonzo de Carmona, a native of the town of Priego, having returned to Spain, wrote his "Two Peregrinations" as he called them, in Florida and Peru. They contained brief notices of facts and circumstances, skipping from one remarkable transaction to another, without much regard to dates or places, or the regular succession of events. These memoirs he sent to Garcilaso de la Vega for his inspection, not knowing at the time that he was occupied on the same subject.

The other soldier was Juan Coles, a native of Zafra; who also wrote an irregular and brief notice of the principal events of the expedition. This he gave to a Franciscan monk, named Fray Pedro Aguado; who incorporated it in a collection of narratives relative to the new world, which he intended to publish. The manuscripts of the friar, however, remained in a crude and neglected state in the hands of a printer at Cordova, where the Inca found them covered with dust and half destroyed by rats. There was nearly a ream of paper, divided into

quires, in the hand-writing of the different narrators. From among these Garcilaso extracted the manuscript of Juan Coles; shortly after he had received that of Alonzo de Carmona. At the time these documents fell into his hands he had already completed his narrative as taken from the lips of his friend; but having now two additional eye witnesses, he went over the whole subject anew, availing himself of the particulars thus unexpectedly furnished to corroborate, strengthen, and enlarge the details already recorded.

Such are the sources from whence Garcilaso de la Vega derived his facts, and for which we have the guarantee of his general character as a man of judgment and veracity. His account of the expedition of Hernando de Soto was held in such credit in former times, and by those most capable of judging, that it was incorporated almost at full length by Herrera the great Spanish historian in his history of American discovery.

ROUTE OF HERNANDO DE SOTO.

In order to assist any future research as to the route of Hernando de Soto and his followers, we here subjoin the various marchings, distances, and points of the compass, as gleaned from different parts of the Spanish and Portuguese narratives. They will be seen to be contradictory and exaggerated, and have frequently caused us great perplexity : we have, however, endeavoured to guide ourselves through the maze they present, by certain general landmarks, and by the researches of various travellers.

Indeed, the Inca himself remarks, " I cannot hold myself responsible for the distances I give, for although I have spared no exertion, and have used all diligence to arrive at the truth, yet I have been unavoidably compelled to leave much to conjecture. The Spaniards had no instruments with them by which they could compute distances ; their main object was to conquer the country, and seek for silver and gold, consequently they gave themselves but little trouble to note down the route."

" De Soto and his followers," says the Inca, " landed at the Bay of Espiritu Santo, whence they marched a little more than two leagues in a north-east direction, and halted at the village of Hirrihigua; resuming their march to the north-east, a journey of twenty-five leagues brought them to the village of Uribarracaxi; hence to the province of Acuera, where they next arrived, was twenty leagues. Departing from Acuera, and marching towards the north, and sometimes to the north-east,

about twenty leagues, they came to the town of Ocali. Here they crossed the river Ocali, and journeying sixteen leagues, reached Ochile, a frontier village of the province of Vitachuco. The Spaniards," says the Inca, "marched more than fifty leagues through this province. We next find them in the village of Vitachuco. Setting out from thence, they marched four leagues to the river of Osachile. Crossing this, they continued on six leagues, and came to the village of the same name. Twelve leagues further, they found the great swamp; traversing this, which was one league and a half across, they continued on six leagues, and were arrested by a deep stream:—having crossed this, they marched four leagues to the chief village of Apalachee, where they went into winter quarters." The Inca here states, that the bay of Aute was about four leagues distant.

Leaving Apalachee, the ensuing spring, they marched to the northward five days, and came to the province of Atapaha; ten days more brought them to the province of Achalaque*. They were five days in traversing this province, and in four days more, came to the frontier village of the province of Cofa. Leaving this village, in six or seven days they came to the province of Cofaqui; from thence, a march of seven days brought them to a river: marching up this for twelve leagues, they came to a frontier village of the province of Cofachiqui; in four days more, they arrived at the capital. Quitting

* It will be seen, by referring to chap. xxvi. of this work, that we consider the Inca under a mistake in bringing them so soon to this province. We prefer the Portuguese account which makes their arrival a month later.

this province, they came, at the end of eight days, to the province of Chalaque. Three days more brought them to the province of Xuala. The Inca here observes, that the Spaniards were fifty-seven days marching from Apalachee to Xuala. He supposes, that they must have marched about four leagues and half a day, and that consequently Xuala must have been nearly two hundred and fifty leagues from the province of Apalachee, and about four hundred from the Bay of Espiritu Santo.

They now struck, he says, in a westwardly direction, making a bend towards the south, and in five days came to the province of Guaxule : a march of six days more, or thirty leagues, brought them to Ychiaha. Their next journey was to the village of Acoste, five leagues from Ychiaha. Quitting this, they traversed the provinces of Cosa, and in twenty-three or four days came to the village of Cosa, which was more than a hundred leagues distant from Acoste. Continuing onward towards the south, five days' march brought them to the town of Talise ; a journey of five or six days more found them in Tascaluza, and marching two leagues further, they halted in the town of Mauvila. From hence, De Soto, to avoid the sea, struck northwardly, and, marching seven days, came to the village of Chicaza : a league distant from this village, was Chicacilla, where they passed the winter.

Setting out the following spring, the first place they arrived at was Alibamo, four or five leagues from Chicacilla : a march of three days brought them to the village of Chisca, on the banks of the Mississippi. Following the banks of this river four days, they crossed it, and,

marching on four or five days longer, they came to the village of Casquin: a journey of about six days brought them to Capaha; from hence the army returned to the village of Casquin. Leaving that town behind them, they continued along the river nine days, when they reached the village of Quiguate. Still following the course of the river, in five days, they came to Colima. The next province they reached was Tula, ten days' journey from the last: a march of six days more brought them to the town of Utiangue, where they wintered.

In the spring the army resumed its wanderings, and, in seven days came to the village of Naguatex. A march of five days brought them to the frontiers of the province of Guancane, which they were eight days in traversing. From hence they struck in a south-eastwardly direction, to reach the Mississippi. They traversed seven provinces, a distance, the Inca conjectures, of about one hundred and twenty leagues, and arrived at the province of Anilco. Marching on through this province for thirty leagues, they came to the capital: a journey of four days further, brought them to the province of Guachoya, where De Soto died.

The army, says Garcilaso, set out for the westward under Luis de Moscoso, and marching more than a hundred leagues came to the province of Auche: continuing on for six or seven days, they arrived at the province of Los Vasqueros. They penetrated more than thirty leagues into this province, when their westward march was arrested by the sight of lofty mountains. From hence they set out on their return to the Mississippi, and

making a bend to the southward, arrived at the village of Aminoya, three months from the time of their departure from Guachoya. The whole distance of their march to the west of the Mississippi, going and returning, he computes to have been more than three hundred and fifty leagues.

Garcilaso de la Vega remarks, that it is difficult to give precisely the length of the Spaniards' voyage down the Mississippi, as they were so engaged in fighting that they had not time to calculate the probable distance; but he adds, that sometime afterwards, in Mexico, they consulted among themselves in the presence of some men who were skilled in maritime matters, and it was computed that having had the aid of sails and oars, the average of a day and night must have been about five and twenty leagues; and as they were nineteen days and nights in performing the voyage, the whole distance was not far short of five hundred leagues. According to the memorandum of Juan Coles, he says, it was considered seven hundred leagues.

Garcilaso adds, that the Mississippi, at Aminoya was nineteen fathoms deep, and a quarter of a league wide; but that some persons, who pretended to a knowledge of cosmography, asserted, the distance from this place where the Spaniards embarked, to where the river takes its rise, was three hundred leagues, and some averred much more; but I adopt, says he, the opinion most within bounds, that would make this river eight hundred leagues in extent,—which was the distance the Spaniards penetrated into the country. Having given a sketch of the route, as stated by the Inca in his narrative, we annex

a memorandum of the route, according to the Portuguese narrator.

From the port of the Holy Ghost (Espiritu Santo), he says, the army marched round the bay about two leagues, and came to the town of Ucita; from thence they went thirty leagues to the coast of Paracoxi; marching on through the small villages Acela and Jocaste, they came to Cale; quitting Cale they passed through Itara and Potano, and on the third day came to Utimama. They next came to a habitation, which he says, the Spaniards called de Mala Paz; and from thence went to Cholupaba. Here they crossed a river, and having marched two days, arrived at Caliquen; five days' march brought them to Napetaca; continuing on by Pelaya, they next reached Uzachil; in two days' march they came to Axille. Having crossed a river they halted in Vitachuco, a village of the province of Palache; passing through the town of Uzelu, they came to Anhayca of Palache, where they went into winter quarters. He states here, that the sea was only ten leagues distant from this place.

On the third of March, they left Anhayca of Palache, and came to Capachiqui on the eleventh: continuing on, they arrived at Toalli on the twenty-first of the same month. Quitting Toalli the twenty-third, they crossed a river and came to Achese: resuming their journey on the first of April, they were at Altaraca on the fourth, and arrived at Ocute on the tenth; and passing through Cofaqui came to Patofa. The writer here observes, that it is fifty leagues from Ocute to Patofa, and not less than three hundred and sixty leagues from Ocute to Espiritu Santo.

Leaving Patofa, they marched nine days, at the rate of seven or eight leagues a day, crossing two large rivers, and encamped in a desert: from hence, they marched about twelve or thirteen leagues down the banks of a river, and came to a small village called Aymay: they next arrived at the province of Cutifachiqui, two days' journey distant from Aymay: departing from Cutifachiqui, they marched a hundred leagues in this province, and came to Chalaque: a journey of five days more brought them to the province of Xualla. The narrator observes here, that from Ocute to Cutifachiqui, it is reckoned a hundred and thirty leagues, and from Cutifachiqui to Xualla, two hundred and fifty. Quitting Xualla, they came, in five days, to Quaxule: two days' march brought them to Canasaqua. They journeyed on five days and came to Chiaha: the next town they reached was Acoste, seven days' journey distant. On the ninth, of July the army left Acoste, and went to Tali, and thence to Coza where they arrived on the fifteenth: they departed from Coza on the twentieth, and passing through Tallimuchase, Ulliballi and Toasi, arrived at Tallise on the eighteenth of September. The narrator remarks in this place, that, they usually marched five or six leagues a day in uninhabited countries; but that in the wilderness they journeyed as fast as possible, lest they should be straightened for want of provisions. He says, it is computed that Tascaluza is twenty leagues south of Cosa; Cosa one hundred and eighty leagues west of Xualla; Xualla two hundred and fifty leagues north of Cutifachiqui; Cutifachiqui four hundred and thirty leagues northeast of Palache, and Palache one hun-

dred west from Espiritu Santo. Leaving Tallise, the Spaniards passed through Casiste, and came to the town of Piache, here they crossed a wide river, and continuing on, arrived at Maville the eighteenth of October: they departed from Maville on the eighteenth of November, and in five days entered the province of Pafallaya. Passing through the village of Taliepatave and Cabusto, and crossing a wide river, they arrived at Chicasa on the eighteenth of December, where they went into winter quarters.

Resuming their march in the spring they came to the village of Alimamu, and after seven days arrived at Quizquiz;—a march of half a league further brought them to the Mississippi. From Tascaluza to the great river, observes the Portuguese, we reckon three hundred leagues. Crossing this river they marched a league and a half to a village in the province of Aquixo: continuing on they came to the village of Casqui. They next reached the village of Pacaha, about a day's journey distant from Casqui: returning to the latter place they continued their march and arrived at Quigate which was one hundred and twenty leagues from Pacaha. Quitting Quigate they marched about forty leagues to the province of Coligoa; five days more brought them to Palisema. They next came to Tafalicoya: four days' journey distant was the province of Cayas which they entered and halted in the town of Tanico. After a march of three days they came to Tulla; they next arrived at the end of five days at Quipana. Continuing onward they passed through Anoixi and Catamaya and arrived at Autiamque where they passed the winter.

Departing from Autiamque on the sixth of March, they passed through the province of Ayays and came to the town of Tultelpina. After three days' march they arrived at Tianto, and the next day, the fifteenth of March, came to Nilco; soon after, they reached Guachoya where De Soto died. Luis de Moscoso set out on the fifth of June, and passing through the province of Catalte arrived at Chaguatè on the twentieth. Three days' journey from thence brought them to the province of Aguacay. They continued on, and passing by Pato on the fourth day came to the province of Maye: they next reached Naguatex. At the end of three days' march they came to the small hamlet of Missobone: thence they passed through Lacane, Mondacao and the province of Ayays, and arrived at Socatino. After twenty days' march they came to the province of Guasco. They continued on to the river Daycao ten days' journey from Guasco, where they arrived in the beginning of October. The Portuguese says here, that from Daycao to the great river, it was one hundred and fifty leagues, which they travelled, marching always to the westward.

From hence they set out on their return, and passing through Naguatex, Chaguatè and the town of Cilano arrived at Nilco in the beginning of December: from thence they went two days' journey to Minoya. Here they embarked upon the Mississippi. Their course, says the narrator, continued seventeen days, during which they travelled two hundred and fifty leagues.

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